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The Week

MR. MACDONALD'S visit has had one unfortunate effect which is always to be expected when a series of public ceremonials is witnessed, virtually meaningless in themselves, but charged with sentimental significance. It has made people feel that everything is now settled in regard to naval limitation, and it is all over except the ceremonial bonfires. This may or may not be true as regards Great Britain and the United States; no one knows what agreement was reached by the Premier and the President, or whether they went any farther, face to face, than they had already gone with the ocean's width between them. No doubt many persons will agree with our Washington correspondent that they must have come to a satisfactory understanding in advance or they would never have allowed the public feeling to run so high; but plenty of statesmen have committed this blunder before, and doubtless they will again. Whatever may be true of these two powers, however, there are still France, Italy and Japan to be reckoned with; and the tone of the joint statement issued by Messrs. Hoover and MacDonald in Washington shows that there is still much uncertainty as to the attitude of these, and particularly the first-named. With the best possible preparation, and regardless of the supposed alteration in the moral landscape made by the Kellogg Pact, a five-power naval conference is still a venture so precarious that it is impossible to look forward with any confidence to a successful result.

LABOR, by winning a decisive majority in the Australian Commonwealth Parliament, regains the power which it lost during the War, when its militant Premier Hughes deserted the party because it would not back conscription, and formed the Nationalist party. Labor has all along retained the reins of power in most of the provincial governments. It was only a few weeks ago that we were assured that its defeat in Queensland showed the disgust of the Australian voters with Socialism, and revealed the ineptitude of the labor policies. Apparently Australia has not been so unhappy about socialistic tendencies as it is supposed to be by conservative forces in this country. The immediate domestic issue in the recent commonwealth election was, indeed, a conservative one—for Australia. The Nationalist government, which lost the election, proposed to abolish the time-honored system of compulsory arbitration of labor disputes, as far as the federal government was concerned. The prestige of the MacDonald government in the home country also played a part. Organized labor in the United States would oppose compulsory arbitration with all its might—but organized labor in the United States has never exerted one-tenth of the power over the governmental authorities which appoint the arbitrators and fix the conditions of arbitration which has been for years exerted by Australian labor.

THE AMBITIOUS EFFORT of the Soviet government to "collectivize" the wheat farms, which is crucial in the economic program of the present government of Russia, seems to be meeting with a considerable success. Russia badly needs imports of machinery and manufactured goods to speed up her industrial production. In default of large foreign

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loans, she can obtain these goods only by paying for them with exports of grain and oil. But Russia's grain exports have not been as large as are required. The splitting up of the big estates into small land-holdings, which accompanied the Revolution, tended in Russia, as everywhere in Europe, to reduce the output reaching the main markets. If these small holdings can be brought together and worked on a large scale with modern machinery, the output and exports of grain may be expected to increase. It is interesting that this effort at "collectivization" under a socialistic program is almost a precise counterpart of the "industrialization" of wheat farming which is in part practiced under capitalism in the United States, and is recommended as a major measure of farm relief. The technical end—greater efficiency through large-scale production and marketing—is the same in both cases. Only the means employed are strikingly different: in Russia the small land-holdings are combined under government auspices and assistance, to the ultimate benefit, it is hoped, of the peasants concerned; in the United States the powerful and successful grow larger in competition with the weaker, which are forced out over the margin of profitable farming, and thus are gradually and painfully "eliminated" from the picture.

AN EXAMPLE of the depressing effect of American capital upon social legislation in undeveloped countries may be witnessed today in Mexico. The Socialist government of that country has framed an enlightened labor code, embodying the principles of collective bargaining and providing safeguards of the most advanced type for the workers. This code was adopted by the Mexican Chamber of Deputies on September 26, and is now before the *Convención de Industriales de la Républica*. The body opposed many of the features of the bill, such as the closed shop and provisions in regard to night-work and overtime. The Mexican business men make the old-time argument that the passage of any such legislation will bring about economic stagnation. But what is more important from the American standpoint is the fact that business men from the United States are working to defeat the labor code. A representative of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana recently presented a statement to the Chamber of Deputies that oil production had fallen off drastically since 1922, and that there would be a further curtailment if the proposed labor code were adopted. Likewise, the chambers of commerce of Lower California report that American banks have notified them that if this bill is passed no more credit will be forthcoming. Even Henry Ford's manager in Mexico City states that he will close his works if the code goes through. In Mexico, the fate of the labor bill seems to be attracting more attention than the presidential campaign. It is a situation which should also be closely watched in the United States. Certain American business interests have long opposed labor legislation in this country. Are they to transfer their opposition to such legislation to weaker countries? In insisting upon maintaining its oil legislation in the face of decreasing production, the Mexican government has proved its devotion to far-sighted principles. We hope that it will not allow reactionary American forces to prevent the realization of another important reform.

ALARMED by the hostility of the Senate Democrats and the Progressives toward the Hawley-Smoot tariff bill and by the apathy of the public concerning the whole business, the high-tariff men have tried to bring pressure on the recalcitrants by blaming their opponents for delay in getting the measure through. Senator Borah's statement that the bill could be passed in ten days if it were rewritten so as to comply with President Hoover's original purpose in calling the special session of Congress—to provide relief to agriculture by raising farm duties to a parity with the tariff on industrial products, not to raise rates indiscriminately on manufactures —may be an exaggeration, but it calls attention once more to the issue really at stake. Why should anyone become excited about delay in passing a bill which is fundamentally undesirable, except to a minority of special interests? It is absurd to pretend, in view of the industrial boom which has been so much in evidence all this year, that business is timidly hesitating to see what Congress is going to do about the tariff. The New Republic is even more cool than Senator Borah toward the delay argument, since even if the bill were amended in the direction he desires, it still would benefit the farmers so little as to be far short of providing the justice which he invokes. A vast majority of the farmers of the United States cannot be benefitted even by increased duties on their own products; they made a tactical mistake by going in for higher tariffs in the first place. It was inevitable, as we pointed out during the campaign, that the occasion would be utilized for further industrial increases. If any new tariff bill should become a law, it will be through a process of compromise which will raise the prices of the things farmers buy more than the prices of what they sell. We hope, therefore, that the present delay will become perpetual.

THE SENATE made an admirable improvement in the tariff law when it adopted the proposal of Senator Cutting, abolishing the right of customs officials to exclude what they, in their exceedingly finite wisdom, deem to be "obscene matter." The proposal to ban revolutionary documents, the absurdity of which has been pointed out in The New Republic in the past, was also much improved, by restricting it to books and pamphlets "urging forcible resistance to any law of the United States or containing any threat to take the life of, or inflict bodily harm upon, any person in the United States." This would at least permit the importation, which would otherwise have been prohibited, of historical

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works dealing with the French, Russian and other revolutions. The bill still contains the objectionable restriction forbidding the importation of contraceptive materials, and it will probably be some time before either the House or Senate becomes sufficiently civilized to remove this ban. Senator Cutting's proposal, in fact, is itself probably better than the House of Representatives will accept. The strongest pressure will be necessary to prevent the tariff bill from being finally adopted with the original, obnoxious provision in it.

AS NORTH CAROLINA justice continues its efforts to catch up with the numerous manifestations of violence which have accompanied the labor unrest within its borders, more and more emphasis is being laid on the fundamental situation—the beginning of what promises to be a historic struggle of the textile workers of the South to organize, bargain collectively, and improve their wages, hours and conditions. Such charges as that of the editor of the Manufacturers' Record—that the whole trouble originated in the design of the Communists to carry on propaganda for the overthrow of government—are rendered palpably absurd by the several actions of mill interests, their sympathizers, and officers of the law, which have defied orderly government and have in fact brought them before the bar of justice. No less violence occurred in Marion, where the Communists are not even indirectly involved, and where the strikers were organized under the United Textile Workers, which is affiliated with the anti-Communist A. F. of L., than in Gastonia, where the strike was led by the radicals. Labor unrest is bred by the conditions under which the mill workers exist, and will continue to break out, either with or without leadership, and without respect to the political or economic theories which may be entertained by any leaders it may enlist. Violent efforts to repress strikers and their leaders will continue without regard to other circumstances, so long as the employers and that part of the community which they influence are not ready to admit the legitimacy of union organization and drastically to improve the conditions of work.

IN SPITE OF the intense parochialism of the South, now being utilized by reactionary interests in their struggle against textile labor, the growing pains which are being exhibited by southern industrialism are bound to become and to remain a national issue, just as have serious labor troubles in Massachusetts, in Colorado, in Pennsylvania, in West Virginia, and in hundreds of other localities in the United States. There is every reason to demand a senatorial investigation of what has been going on. There is every reason why the American Federation of Labor should muster all available resources in an effort to assist the United Textile Workers to bring leadership, plan and relief to the southern workers and help them to build permanent unions. The objection that this is "foreign" intrusion is absurd in view of the fact that the textile interests, employers and employees alike, compete not only on a national but on an international scale. There was no such outcry against "outside interference," when outside capital established mills in the South, encouraged by express invitations of southern chambers of commerce which held out as an inducement the pitifully low wages and long hours at which the local labor supply could be had.

THOSE who accuse the American Federation of Labor of being in league with the reactionary forces of the nation should not overlook at least two important actions of the Toronto convention. In one, it formally indorsed governmental old-age pension legislation, in spite of the strenuous opposition voiced by simon-pure trade-unionists like Andrew Furuseth of the seamen, who fear all governmental action in behalf of the workers. It would be a good thing if the unions within the movement had more of the fighting spirit which Furuseth says they lack, but the history of this and other countries amply demonstrates that militancy in organizing and fighting for labor's rights is not inconsistent with a progressive attitude toward social legislation. The other sign of encouragement was President William Green's expressed opposition to the policy advocated before the convention by the Commander of the American Legion, for universal industrial conscription in time of war. You can conscript men, but in spite of the Legion's pretensions, it will be impossible to conscript money and prevent profits, if war should occur; labor is not fooled on this issue. Though the Federation has striven to maintain a friendly attitude toward the Legion ever since the foundation of the latter, and has consistently invited the Legion commanders to address it, Mr. Green showed no hesitation in opposing the Legion policy in this important matter. The prestige of the Legion has suffered severely through its connection with Shearer and the interests standing to profit by naval construction; it is no longer so effective a cats-paw for the sinister militarists as it used to be.

EVERYONE agrees that our present calendar represents a sadly inferior system. With its months of varying length, only one of which is evenly divisible into weeks, it makes endless trouble—the cost of its inefficiency, to the United States alone, being estimated at a half billion dollars annually, or some such fantastic sum. Several proposals are before the world for a revision of the calendar, of which only one has any considerable backing in Western Europe and America. This is the scheme endorsed by Mr. George Eastman, which provides thirteen months of twenty-eight days each. An earnest propaganda is in progress for this calendar, and it is rapidly winning support. Soviet Russia, on the other hand, without consulting anyone outside its own borders, has announced that it will put into effect immediately a calendar of its own, containing

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twelve months, each of which has six weeks of five days. Russia's purpose is partly to abolish Sunday, as part of the campaign against religion. Workers will have one day off in five, but these holidays will be "staggered" through the week so that four-fifths of the employees of every plant will be on the job every day, and production will be continuous. The coming year is, by common consent, the critical one of the Russian five-year program, and everything possible is being done to speed production. At the same time, we regret that a new calendar should have been introduced in the U. S. S. R. when there is so little possibiliy that it will be adopted by the rest of the world, and when another proposal is up for consideration, which has so much to recommend it. There is confusion enough between the nations without making a deliberate addition to it.

WHEN Jeanette Rankin interrupted the roll call on April 5th, of 1917 to say, "I want to stand by my country—but I cannot vote for war," the feminist movement almost got a knock-out blow. Women, bawled the patriots, would infect politics with pacifism; an alarm which the present situation in Congress proves false. There are eight members of the softer sex in the lower house today, who disagree on the tariff, prohibition and farm relief, but are uncontaminated on the issue of National Defense. Mrs. Norton, of New Jersey, believes in preparedness as passionately as she does in Tammany Hall because, as she once put it, "it never brought on a war." Mrs. Rogers, of Massachusetts, not only spoke for the Morin Educational Munitions Bill (to make war products in time of peace) but introduced a few obscurer ones of the same kind herself. The dear lady is constantly waving a flag over the Citizens' Military Training Camp in her district and actually believes her country has never "fought in any war but a just one." Mrs. Langley, of Kentucky, has been working on a war memorial, at the possible expense of less patriotic issues; Mrs. Kahn of California won her fight for a place on the Military Affairs Committee, where she can work for her chief interest: preparedness. "World peace," she once said, "is a dream, talked about since Moses," and on another occasion, "we have disarmed enough, now let some of the others do it."

ALTHOUGH the newer gentlewomen have not committed themselves on the floor, we have evidence to show that they will not make the patriots suffer. The vigorous Mrs. McCormick of Illinois saw no incompatibility between the Kellogg Pact and the fifteen-cruiser bill, even if she is a Quaker. When a group of lady pacifists besought the lovely Mrs. Pratt, of New York, to vote against all military appropriations, she rejoined: "How would you like to walk the streets without police protection?" Mrs. Oldfield, of Arkansas, recently told a correspondent "I always was for National Defense and always will be," which makes that lady safe for patriotism. This roster leaves the 100 percenters with only Mrs. Owen, of Florida to worry about. True, the charming daughter of the Commoner in her Chautauqua lectures spread the gospel of peace; but then, all the gentlewomen love peace and vote for National Defense. Somehow we feel sure that the practical Mrs. Owen will emit a musical Aye on the next preparedness bill just as she did on the high tariff. Besides, like Mrs. Langley, she is a D. A. R., and a good one. One may be, it is true, a sincere believer in peace and still not be ready to scrap all armament; there are many more important things to do in pursuit of international amity than to vote against cruisers. But the striking thing is that few, if any, of these ladies are noted for any activity in those phases of the peace movement which even the most realistically minded would approve. Patriotism—if we judge by a representative body—is not motherless. The feminine heart which, in the old apothegm, loved a uniform, is still young.

An Anglo-American Entente

LONG before Mr. Macdonald reached our shores, to be greeted with an outburst of the typical American exuberance which is so often taken by foreigners as being more significant than it really is, the French had begun to express loud fears. Obviously under the inspiration of the government, the Paris press viewed with alarm the possibility of Continental powers, and in particular, France herself. It may be assumed that these apprehensions were only partially real. France is frightened about the sacrifices she may be called upon to make in the forthcoming naval conference at London. She wants to establish herself in advance in the strongest possible bargaining position, and her protestations were no doubt partly intended for that purpose.

In part, however, they may have been genuine. The whole continent of Europe has for several years been in a pathological state of mind regarding the United States and its possible sinister purposes. To us is attributed not only a malevolent desire to control the whole world and make it over in our not very desirable image, but the ability, through our overwhelming financial strength, to do this. The efforts of the Macdonald government to obtain an understanding with the United States on naval and other matters may really have seemed to the signify that Great Britain had gone over to the camp of the common enemy. Messrs. Hoover and MacDonald, in their joint statement issued last week, sought to offset this suspicion. They tried to put the Anglo-American discussions into the frame-work of the Kellogg Pact. They spoke of "contributing something to the solution of the problems of peace in which all other nations are interested and which call for their coöperation." President Hoover no doubt was author of the phrase which said that the United States "will never con-

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sent to become entangled in European diplomacy," and Mr. MacDonald added for Great Britain that his country "is resolved to pursue a policy of active coöperation with its European neighbors." They look forward, they said, to the "coöperation of other naval powers," to be attained by "the same free and candid discussion of needs which has characterized our conversations." The tone of this statement, and the character of Mr. MacDonald's three New York speeches last Friday, are reported to have relieved the French apprehensions to a considerable extent, and the tone of the Paris comment has changed in consequence.

To an American, the fear that Great Britain and the United States were plotting together in a manner inimical to the welfare of France, seems absurdly out of touch with reality. The American thinks of the effort in which Messrs. MacDonald and Hoover have been engaged as one of a humanitarian character. Yet it is true that if the London conference is successful, what may grow out of it could not unfairly be described as an Anglo-American entente, of a strictly limited character and objective. These two powers are stronger than any possible combination which could be raised against them—at least, during the next decade. They are stronger not only in military and naval strength but in financial and industrial resources. Secretary Stimson insisted that nothing like a pooling of the two fleets is contemplated; but it is easily possible that the joint policy which will be pursued will amount to that in effect. The Kellogg Pact is at present without any machinery of enforcement; but an agreement by these two powers to pursue a common policy in regard to violations would be all the enforcement anyone could ask. While the Labor government rules in Great Britain and the present administration continues in Washington, it is not unfair to say that these two powers are determined, not only to halt the naval rivalry between themselves but to do what they can to preserve the peace of the world. To be sure, the Labor government rules by a minority, and will be overturned if it diverges too sharply from British public opinion. Mr. Hoover, also, has to remember the Congress, which certainly will not accept commitments similar to those it rejected in 1920. At the same time, there is present in both countries at this moment a will to peace which enables the two governments to go a considerable distance along a common road.

Does this imply a threat to the League of Nations? Will the Geneva organization be relegated to the background because the potential power behind Anglo-American joint action is so much greater than that which lies behind its own activities in a similar sphere? The New Republic sees no reason for assuming that this will be the case. In looking toward America, Great Britain has not drawn away from the League. On the contrary, the Labor government is coöperating as heartily in the work of that organization as it did five years ago. If anything, the new Anglo-American understanding will bring the United States closer than ever to Geneva. Mr. MacDonald stands in the position of liaison officer between Washington and Geneva. His activities offer a better hope than has existed at any previous time, that the United States will not, in pursuance of its own individual aims, take action inimical or perhaps even fatal, to the League.

In the past, the French, like the British, have been accustomed to fish successfully in troubled waters. It is hard for them to conceive of an understanding between the United States and Great Britain which is not born out of a spirit of hostility to somebody or something. Nevertheless, that is true of such an Anglo-American understanding as seems to be in prospect. The building of or failing to build cruisers is a thing which in itself is of little importance; all the navies in the world could be reduced to half their size tomorrow, and a terrible and sanguinary conflict could break out the following day. If, however, an atmosphere of confidence and good will can be engendered, the legitimate aspirations of the common people in all countries will have a new chance to reach fruition. That is the real hope with which we are entitled to look forward to a successful conclusion of the London conference.

The Duel in China

THE conflict between China's two strong men, averted last spring by an eleventh-hour compromise, appears to be coming to a head. Chiang Kai-shek and Feng Yu-hsiang are marching troops against each other, and while troop movements in China are often only opening maneuvers for position in subsequent negotiations, it appears more likely as we go to press that there will be fighting on a grand scale.

Primarily, the issue is one of personal rivalry. After nearly twenty years of at least nominally republican government China's political evolution has not yet reached the stage where two strong men can coexist, even though not seriously differing in general aims. Chiang and Feng were able to cooperate as long as there was the Peking government as a common enemy. Soon after Peking had been eliminated and the Nationalist government was established in Nanking, they fell out. Evidently there can be no peace until one of them is overthrown.

Behind the issue of personal rivalry lies the broader question whether the Nanking government can maintain its ascendancy: whether, indeed, any one government can maintain ascendancy in China under present conditions. The Nanking government was set up sixteen months ago, after a long period of sectional autonomy under practically independent military satraps. Unification was proclaimed under the rule of the Kuomintang, or Nationalist party. As a matter of fact the mandate of Nanking at that time was unnoticed in all but three of the eighteen

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provinces, but since then it has succeeded in extending its sway over half of the country. There has been more than one attempt to challenge its control, but all have failed, each failure leaving Nanking more strongly entrenched, both in power and prestige.

The coalition just formed under Feng Yu-hsiang is another attempt and a much more formidable one. If it presses the challenge to actual war, the Nanking government will undergo its decisive test. If Nanking is successful again—if, that is, Chiang Kai-shek wins—the supremacy of the present government is unlikely to be challenged for a long time. If Nanking is defeated, another lengthy period of intermittent warfare will probably ensue. Perhaps that is inevitable. It may be that the attempt to impose a centralized government upon the whole country was premature, and that a working agreement for a few years to live and let live, among three or four leaders securely established in as many parts of the country, would have been more practicable. The decay of the Manchu dynasty in its last fifty years of rule and the subsequent years of revolution and destruction may have done more than to destroy one system. They may also have left political vitality too spent for the building up of another system, without a longer time than has elapsed, for recovery. But from the beginning the Chinese revolution has been in a hurry. Revolutions usually are.

In any case, it is certain that the Chinese people will lose. From the point of view of their interests, the outbreak of warfare will be more than ordinarily tragic. In the first place, there is famine in the land, partly because there have been droughts, and partly because the productivity of large areas has been reduced or destroyed by armies on the march. In the second place, the economic structure of the country has already been shaken by ten years of warfare and cannot endure much more without complete collapse. China has learned enough from the West to conduct its wars now with costly armaments. Both sides will need money. Banks will be forced to make loans, levies will be made on business, grain and mules will simply be taken from such peasants as still have them.

The mere promise of peace in the last year had already brought about a slight economic recovery. Railways were running again and goods could be moved. Regions almost isolated before were being opened to trade again. Troops were being freed for the only purpose for which they are of any use in China—or anywhere else for that matter—that is, to put down organized banditry. A faint hope was beginning to dawn that China was coming up out of the depths. There were even those who dared to believe that the numerous reconstruction plans which have been set down on paper during these many years of revolution might begin to materialize. If only for its psychological effect, therefore, a renewal of war will be disastrous. Already war-weary to the point of despair, the Chinese people will be plunged into hopelessness. A hopeless people, old and weary and skeptical at best, is poor material for the task of remaking a civilization. There may even be the danger that the masses, goaded beyond endurance, will turn on the rulers: there have been such periods in Chinese history. Night has fallen over half a continent when they came.

There is a psychological value in peace in China, just now. It can become a habit. Every additional month that it can be maintained establishes it the more firmly. It has already become necessary for Chinese military leaders to denounce militarism and profess disarmament. Only thus could they gain prestige, a fact which in itself is not only significant but educative in influence—educative even for the military leaders. If the present crisis can be surmounted without fighting, the idea of government by orderly procedure will be further strengthened. If not, the most that can be hoped is that there will be a decisive result and one side or the other will be eliminated. It must be emphasized, however, that whatever the result, it will make little difference to the foreign powers. Whatever government or military group succeeds, it will be nationalistic so far as foreign privileges and the unequal treaties are concerned. It is the one point on which Chinese of all parties agree.

The Canned Virtuoso

NOTHING is more characteristic of our age than the success of the phonograph, the radio and the talking motion picture. Not since the invention of printing has there been any new device comparable with these in preserving and amplifying human utterances. Our modern inventions may be even more important than Herr Gutenberg's, for they give more and ask less. Literacy is hardly necessary, so be it one has ears. The quality of sound available to the average listener is almost as high as the quality of style available to the average reader. He can read Shakespeare, but he can also hear Beethoven interpreted by the foremost performers and conductors. Whether the phonograph, the radio or the talkie be the medium of reproduction, he is theoretically offered the best there is. The qualifying adverb has to be inserted because the mechanics of the processes of canning and uncanning sound have not yet been perfected. Neither music nor the speaking voice comes out of the horn quite as it went in. We may say, however, that what goes in is, or may be, the voice of the wisest, the wittiest, the most entertaining of mankind. Let it be granted that usually it is twaddle. It need not be. If a new Messiah were to appear his Sermon on the Mount could be heard by all mankind—provided, of course, the managers of the broadcasting stations or the manufacturers of the new reels believed it the sort of thing mankind ought to hear. What a chance for a great Teacher!

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Of the three modern methods of reproducing sound the audible motion picture has at present the most importance as an actual or potential educational factor. It will lose this importance when, and if, television is so far perfected that a person in one part of the country may instantly be seen as well as heard by persons equipped with the proper apparatus in other parts. It necessarily lacks the thrill of the minutely contemporaneous. On the other hand it has the compensating advantage of permanence, assuming that something can be done to keep the sound tracks on the edge of the film from wearing out. Let us consider some of its possibilities, keeping a little closer to reality than did Mr. William Fox in his flamboyant public statement a few days ago.

In the first place it ought to kill off mediocrity. It ought to, and if properly handled it will. Let us see what that means. Mediocrity flourishes as long as people do not acquire a taste for the best or—which is almost as rare—the seemingly best. Not so many years ago it was physically impossible for most people to hear really expert performances in instrumental or vocal music or in public speaking. Consequently they put up with the inexpert or relatively expert. Glee clubs, village quartettes and hack lecturers flourished, and congregations listened respectfully to perfectly terrible sermons. In schools and colleges poor teachers got by because there was no familiar standards of better teaching. Perhaps this is still the case. But it cannot be so, for long.

It may be objected that the populace has never known good books when it saw them and will be no more likely to know good playing, singing or talking when it hears them—and sees them. Populaces are like that. But though the public taste may be low, judged by severe esthetic standards, it does make distinctions. The public does recognize adroitness even though it may not recognize greatness. It has learned to discern skill, even though such skill may be no more than that of the tap dancer or the juggler who can keep a dozen oranges going at once. Having once grown accustomed to the most accomplished performers it will not put up with bunglers. And since only a few out of the mass of performers, under what we may call the handicraft system of entertainment, are anything but bunglers, the talking movie, ingeniously used, is bound to create havoc.

Consider the Chautauqua hireling. Consider the woman's club lecturer. Consider the underpaid teacher, who pursues that avocation because he cannot think of any other which would pay him more. Imagine any one of these sweated employees obliged to compete on the same platform with the supreme exponents of his art. He can no more do it than Switzerland can succeed in a naval race with Great Britain. Yet the talking movie can enforce just that kind of competition. It can present an individual in everything but the living flesh. This is the only hitch. A living performer has some advantages that a mechanical substitute lacks. He can be applauded, or if need be hissed. His very humanness, the possibility that he may stumble or forget a line, the fact that he can sweat and his ears can get red, the hope, sometimes gratified, that a cat or a dog—a horse or cow is too much to expect—may walk out on the stage behind him—all these contingencies form a link between him and his audience and relieve the audience's tormenting sense of inferiority. But if it is being expertly amused an audience can forget its lowly origin and limited intelligence. It is the business of expert amusers to make it forget. Witness Joe Cook, W. C. Fields, the late William Jennings Bryan, Kreisler, Greta Garbo, Lloyd George, Clarence Darrow, the Massachusetts board of censors and a hos of others.

We may imagine, therefore, in the field of amusement and in that of education—and the only successful education really is that which does amuse—steady elimination not only of the unfit but of the merely relatively fit. Nobody will go to Siwash when by turning a switch he can bring Harvard into his living-room. No one will care much for the Hillsboro Brass Band or Willie Eisenstein's Jazz Maniacs when he can both see and hear Sousa and Whiteman. No one will study medicine at a second-rate school when he can have the Mayo clinic or Johns Hopkins before his eyes. For certain supremely important species of education and diversion a half dozen geniuses can take the places now held by thousands of the barely competent. We shall need only one university, only thirty or forty theaters, only one church for each denomination, only one common school for each state, only enough brass and jazz bands to afford relief when we grow tired of the monotonous and exquisite perfection of one.

But there will be a great increase in the number of accomplished bricklayers, pipe-fitters, carpenters, journalists, bootblacks, head-waiters, cooks and boiler-makers. We do not picture this eventuality as a Utopia. We merely point to it dispassionately and cold-bloodedly as a trend in what may or may not be progress. But plainly it will have its compensations.

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The Labor Government and the Near East

THE PRINCIPAL policy of a minority government, such as that now ruling the British commonwealth, must be to make itself a *majority government*. This is especially true of British Labor. Its opponents assert, and it admits, that a clear majority must be got before it can even attempt to realize its Socialist principles. Wherefore its present program must be to win the sympathies and support of as much as possible of the non-partisan, non-political middle mass of the electorate. And their votes can, in the circumstances, be much more easily won abroad than at home. For in the airy attitudes of foreign affairs a generous gesture—a happy hit—even a telling phrase may work miracles. Whereas in the thorny thickets of home affairs it takes years of clearance and cultivation to raise a crop.

In foreign affairs this second Labor government has thus far been as fortunate as the first. If the Young scheme is even harder for Labor itself to swallow than was the Dawes Plan, yet Mr. Snowden's debut as "the Plain Dealer" has brought down the house. If the Labor delegation at Geneva has not shown the same pentecostal gift of tongues as in 1924, yet Mr. Henderson's slow-motion suppling of previous angular Anglo-Saxon attitudes in respect of League obligations has been well received. If the breaches made by the previous government in relations with the Union of Soviets, and with the United States, are being more slowly bridged by the MacDonald of 1929 than they were by the MacDonald of 1924, he looks like making a more permanent job of it. Yet none of these successes, solid as they are and serious as are the problems that they will eventually settle, will be as useful as success in the apparently remote and secondary questions of Egypt and Palestine.

Why is this? One reason is geographical. The main artery of the British Empire is the Suez Canal. This vital artery was outside the body politic and is at present protected all round by growths of British garrisons in Egypt and Palestine. A further extension of this protective growth into Irak covers future arterial developments in oil pipe-lines to Mesopotamia and air-mail lines to India. It is this whole arterial system that is threatened by local inflammations due to Egyptian, Jewish and Arab nationalist insurgencies.

This brings us to the political reason why this region as a problem is an "asses' bridge" that many British governments have failed to cross safely. Each of these movements is an extreme expression of the ideals that inspire its principles. British authority over eastern peoples has been so generally accepted—its administration has been so generally acceptable—that only a new native idealism and inspiration can threaten it. In Egypt, pure nationalist idealism proved strong enough to force the British Empire in 1922 to cancel its protectorate and concede a self-government that, in principle, only just stopped short of full sovereignty. In Palestine, Jewish religious and racial idealism obtained from the same source, in the form of a League mandate, the military protection of the Empire for its experiment in Zionism. In Irak, the religious and racial idealism of the Arabs has, on the other hand, obtained what amounts to a surrender of the mandate and full sovereignty. All these concessions are contrary to the conceptions of British Conservatives as to what constitutes safety for the Empire.

Let us take each of these in turn and see how far the Labor conception differs and how far it has been successfully developed. In regard to Egypt, Labor considers that the maintenance of commercial communications through the canal is not even guarded, still less guaranteed, by British garrisons in Egypt. On the contrary, these garrisons, in time of peace, act as an irritant to nationalist insurgence—while in time of war, whether general or local, their removal or reinforcement would be an embarrassment. So far as Egypt itself is concerned, Labor considers that friendly "foreign" relations between the Empire and a fully sovereign Egypt are the best security. Indeed, if for the sake of peace and for the protection of communications, pressure has to be brought to bear on an Egyptian government, this can be done diplomatically on a sovereign state with much less friction than departmentally on a self-governing dependency. To a sovereign Egypt, the imminent menace would not be British sea or air power, but the adjacent military power of Italian imperialism in Tripoli and Erythrea.

Now, what are the difficulties with which such a Labor policy has to deal? In 1924, its Egyptian settlement broke down over the nationalist claims to the Sudan. Labor can no more concede this today, though it is willing to restore the nominal condominium that was repealed after the assassination of the Sirdar. The Egyptian title to the Sudan is no better than that of the English, while Egypt has been proved quite incapable of directing its government and developing its growth. Egypt's vital interests in the canal can be internationally guaranteed under the League, and Egypt probably now recog-

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nizes that a British Sudan is the best safeguard against an Italian encirclement.

But a worse difficulty is nationalist distrust of the British, "bearing gifts," and dislike for the present proposals of the Labor government because they were negotiated with their political opponents. It would be too much to expect the Wafd leaders to recognize that it is British Labor that has restored parliamentary government in Egypt and is about to restore Egyptian nationalism to power at the coming elections. Yet not only does the draft treaty now awaiting ratification directly concede the nationalist claims to full sovereignty so far as Egypt is concerned, exclusive of the Canal Zone, but it has indirectly ended the supremacy of the King, the suspension of the convention and the suppression of the Wafd itself. The Labor government, by replacing that Proconsul, Lord Lloyd, who aided and abetted the *coup d'état,* with a professional diplomat of impeccable correctitude, and by requiring that the new treaty be ratified by Parliament, has in fact, though not in form, affected a revolution in favor of the Wafd. If, in spite of this, anti-British feeling is so strong and the new nationalist government so weak that the treaty is not immediately ratified, the terms it offers are so good that they will somehow or other, sooner or later, go through.

Its passage through the British Parliament will really be more problematical—for Labor, unlike the other parties, submits its treaties to parliamentary approval (hereby effecting another restoration of parliamentary government—only this one is at home). Labor will win, all right, but there is something in the Conservative contention that the peace and prosperity of eastern communities still depend on the authority and armed force of western civilization. The argument that British garrisons are necessary for the policing of Egypt will be strengthened by the outbreak in Palestine which is generally, though wrongly, ascribed to their absence.

Which brings us to the *plat du jour*—Palestine soup. And it's no use the Labor "Augustus" saying "take the nasty soup away," because he is in the soup. So far, he has got out of the mess pretty well. He has sent ships and troops—appointed a Commission of Inquiry—and "maintained the continuity of foreign policy" as well as could the most correct Conservative cabinet. But this is essentially a question in which patriotism is not enough; and there is no evidence that Labor understands what it is up against.

For in Palestine today we have not mere faction fighting between Jews and Arabs over their rights in the Wailing Wall. We have a collision between the two forces of western money power and eastern man-power—between the penetration into Asia of western industrial civilization and the citadel of eastern Islamic civilization in Arabia—between the Jewish and the Arabic races and religions. A more fundamental and formidable conflict could scarcely be created, and it matters little who caused the disorders. The Arabs attribute them to the intentional provocation of American Zionist Jews, with a view to raising money, and to that of Bolshevist Jews anxious to raise rebellion. The Jews attribute them to an Arab pogrom caused by the success of the Zurich conference and of the Zionist cause. Either or both may be right or wrong. The fact remains that you have here the ideology of western industrial civilization, driven by Jewish monetary power and British military power into the flank of eastern Islamic ideology, entrenched in Arabian Wahabism. Now Zionism is an ideal which the British public, educated as it is in the Old Testament, welcomed with great sympathy. But when Dr. Wise, in the same speech, denounces the British for maladministration and denies their power to surrender the mandate as "an obligation of honor," he is making a mistake. The legally minded public knows the Balfour declaration is countered by conflicting contracts made with the Arabs by Sykes, MacMahon and Lawrence. The Labor public has no use anyway for mandates, which it considers a mask for imperialism, while the ordinary public would demand the evacuation of Palestine the moment the occupation seemed likely to involve war with the Arabs. Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Henderson are perfectly honest in avoiding offense to Jewish monetary power by giving assurances against surrender of the mandate. But monetary power cannot hold a Labor or any democratic government against a peace movement. The surrender of Constantinople and Cairo were far more serious steps than would be the surrender of Jerusalem. And Labor has already practically surrendered Irak.

What, then, will Labor policy in Palestine be when it develops? The past attitude has been to support the Jews in their claim that, though only a sixth of the population, they should have parity with the Arabs, and that the British final vote should always be in their favor. On the other hand, the Arab claim for a self-governing state, with an Arab preponderance in power of six to one, would be the end of the Zionist experiment. And the British taxpayer is beginning to ask how long he will have to pay the cost of protecting this expensive experiment, including compensation when the protection has been too much economized. So it seems likely that unless the imported Zionists can soon settle down on as friendly terms with the Arabs as the local Jews, the Labor party will begin to consider substituting direct administration by the League of Nations for the British mandate.

As a "guaranteed minority" under the League protected by, say, a Swedish gendarmerie, a Swiss judicial system, a German administrator—Zionism might develop on sounder lines than under the present plan of using the British to fight its battles. If Zionism is to realize its ideal, it must sever its association with British imperialism. The present position will be maintained so long as peace is maintained. To maintain the mandate by armed force would be a mistake that Labor is unlikely to make.

GEORGE C. YOUNG.

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John Dewey at Seventy

WHEN John Dewey was proposed for the headship of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Chicago, William James said: "He is big enough to carry off his eccentricities." By eccentricities he meant the various unorthodox opinions and attitudes which already characterized the young professor; and as to the latter's ability to carry them in the face of the public, James was right. Dewey has challenged dominant opinion on its most cherished beliefs—on supernatural religion and morality, on the sacredness of private property, on methods of education and standards of culture, and on the superstition of art. No other man of our day has dealt with so wide a range of interests and so many social problems. He has given himself generously to a dozen causes anathema to powerful sections of the ruling class—to racial equality, to labor, to democratic control of institutions, to free speech, to oppressed nationalities, to self-determination in Mexico, China and Russia. And he has done so not as a rebel, not as a guerilla in partisan warfare, but as a leader, with authority and prestige. He has been big enough to work with the social forces of his time without yielding himself up to them. And in his many fields of effort he has kept a singleness of purpose and consistency of approach and rectitude of direction, which give to his career of varied enterprises a unity and integrity which make him at seventy the most impressive and altogether significant figure in American life.

The celebration of Doctor Dewey's seventieth birthday is properly the occasion for considering in detail his contributions to the several departments of thought and action in which he has been engaged. It would be impossible to attempt in this article even a summary of these activities, but it may be pointed out that they all are referable to a single principle. Doctor Dewey is a humanist in the modern sense. His pragmatism is an expression of the realistic attitude which limits the consideration of mankind to the elements and functions of human nature itself, and finds its field of investigation in human experience. Constantly in his writings we find reference to these terms of final authority—human nature and human experience. In departure from the traditional procedure of philosophy, he treats reason and the moral and esthetic senses as functions, not as independent entities. He puts the query, "If reason is independent of empirically verifiable realities of human nature, such as instincts and organized habits, why should there not also exist a moral or practical reason independent of natural operations?" And the answer is found in his attack upon the notion that "morality is distinct in its origin, working and destiny from the natural structure and career of human nature." In regard to art he declares the same alternative. "Either art is a continuation, by means of intelligent selection and arrangement, of natural tendencies or natural events; or art is a peculiar addition to nature, springing from something dwelling exclusively in the heart of man." In dealing with society he warns us: "Whenever we are concerned with understanding social transition and flux, or with projects of reform, personal and collective, our study must go to analysis of native tendencies." And finally, of experience he tells us, "We need a word like experience to remind us that the world which is lived, suffered and enjoyed as well as thought of, has the last word in all human inquiries and surmises."

This trust in human nature is not only the basis of Doctor Dewey's philosophy. It determines his thought and colors his mood in every field of endeavor—education, politics, art. It finds its working devices in two corollary principles—freedom and coöperation. Dewey's early reputation was made as an educator in the Elementary School of the University of Chicago. There the characterizing features of his method were to give the child the utmost possible freedom of initiative, to make the child's experience in dealing with the world about him the basis of his learning, and to encourage him to work easily and happily with others. Dewey's influence in higher education has been in the same direction—to set the individual free by training his capacities. He has realized that the public schools, instead of ministering to this result, are made vehicles of propaganda for vested interests, and instruments of standardization. No one has spoken out more boldly on this theme than Dewey.

> Our schooling does not educate, if by education be meant a trained habit of discriminating inquiry and discriminating belief. . . . We dupe ourselves and others because we have not that inward protection against sensation, excitement, credulity and conventionally stereotyped opinion which is found only in a trained mind. This fact determines the fundamental criticism to be levelled against current schooling, against what passes as an educational system. It not only does little to make discriminating intelligence a safeguard against surrender to the invasion of bunk, especially in its most dangerous form—social and political bunk—but it does much to favor susceptibility to a welcoming reception of it.

Furthermore, Dewey has realized that freedom on the part of pupils can be inculcated only by teachers who are themselves free from political and

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class control, and that this freedom of teaching can be secured only by organization. Accordingly he has been for years an active member of the New York local of the Federation of Teachers.

It has often been objected to this gospel of freedom in the school that its practice leaves the pupil recalcitrant and willful, unstable and indisposed to sustained effort. In place of routine authority, however, Dewey has a source of discipline in the second principle to which I have referred, that of coöperation. Man by virtue of his human nature is an associative animal. He finds his chief happiness in communication and coöperation with others. This is the theme of an eloquent chapter in "Experience and Nature," in which Dewey considers language the most fundamental of social functions. He holds with the behaviorists that we should not have talked with ourselves unless we had first talked with others. "Language," he says, "is coöperation in an activity in which there are partners." "Communication is an immediate enhancement of life, enjoyed for its own sake." And language makes possible the pooling of activity and interest which is the strongest social force. "Shared experience is the greatest of human goods." "There is no mode of action as fulfilling and as rewarding as is concerted consensus of action." Thus the impulse toward freedom, which in its free play results in anarchy, finds in the tendency toward association its restraining and corrective principle.

In the human instincts of freedom and coöperation Dewey finds the basis of democracy; and here as elsewhere his faith in human nature is a lively faith, though he admits that it is on trial. After being accepted in the nineteenth century as almost axiomatic, democracy has experienced a serious check in the twentieth. Not only is its present failure to meet the necessities of the industrial world a matter of criticism, but it is subject to the competition of other forms of organization, Fascism in Italy, Communism in Russia, which have certain immediate advantages in the way of efficiency. In the face of the anti-democratic tendencies of political thought since the War, Doctor Dewey has stood firmly for the primitive faith. In his little book, "The Public and Its Problems," he exposes the reasons why the principle of democracy has been so little effective in spheres in which the public interest clearly outweighs the private. He points out that the revolution which changed the face of society took place as the result of the application of science and technology in a world where there were no forms of public control fitted to cope with the new conditions. Peoples gained the right to select their representatives, but the precedents of government were still those of privilege and private interest, and to elected, as to dynastic, rulers, the immediate consideration was their own continuance in power. To this end they sought alliance with the strongest economic force, and the protection of private property remained the chief function of government. In this welter of inherited habits and new thought, democracy was forced to create its institutions. It is little wonder that "the new age of social relationships has no political agencies worthy of it," and that "the democratic public is still largely inchoate and unorganized." Applying the known principles of human nature, it appears that "this inchoate public is capable of organization only when indirect consequences are perceived, and when it is possible to project agencies which order their occurrence." Such perception and projection are the functions of social science. Dewey points out that the hope of discovering the means by which a "scattered, mobile and manifold public may so recognize itself as to define and express its interests" gains plausibility from the analogy of the development of natural science. This progressed only after the *a priori* method was abandoned in favor of observation and experiment—"the analysis of what is going on and why it goes on." Such a proceeding is only beginning with respect to social phenomena.

As social philosopher as well as educator, Dewey relies on the two principles of freedom and cooperation. There must be freedom both of social inquiry and of distribution of its results, for "there can be no public without full publicity with respect to all consequences which concern it." To say that we have such freedom at present is absurd. Even where legal restrictions have been diminished "there is a social pathology which works powerfully against effective inquiry into social institutions and conditions." The initiation of a scientific plan of social inquiry and its persistent exercise in contemporary matters, the extension of the experimental method under its guidance to human affairs, and the correlation of all social studies in its support—these are the means available for the organization of the public.

I have tried to outline the underlying principles which give unity to Dewey's work, and account in no small degree for the position which he holds today. There would be a conspicuous lack in this process if it failed to take account of his own personality. For Dewey constitutes still another exception to the conventional idea of the philosopher, in that he lives his philosophy. In deducing his conclusions from the facts of human nature, he has had a peculiarly favorable example of that material to draw upon. No one can be long in his company, can observe the rugged, earnest features, gaze into the deep-set eyes with their look of furtive trust (as someone said of Emerson's), hear that even voice with its calm, neutral tones, without feeling that we have here a man of extraordinary simplicity and sincerity. He is his own best argument for trusting human nature. Dewey is not enthusiastic. He is quiet, candid, patient. When you talk to him he gives complete attention, and when he speaks it is with the assurance of understanding. His writing has the quality of his behavior—it is, above all, honest. He uses words with a full sense of responsibility, and his sentences,

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if occasionally contorted with the violence of his struggle to speak the truth, have often the clean thrust of aphorism or epigram. Dewey is rather retiring than expansive, more at home in the study than on the platform, yet he has not held himself above the mêlée. He has not been afraid of controversy. When his principles have been challenged in the case of obscure individuals, he has fought for them. Recently as a member of the Teachers' Federation he espoused the cause of his colleagues in New York City subjected to discrimination because of liberal opinions. When the A. F. of L. repudiated the liberal view of labor education held at Brookwood, he struck boldly at Matthew Woll, the head of the reactionary forces. He has defied the Civic Federation in setting forth a sane view of the civilization of Soviet Russia, and he is at the head of the organization to develop cultural relations with that country. He has lately accepted the presidency of a League of Independent Political Action, whose work is to bring to articulate organization in its own interests the public that is so inchoate, so supine, so indifferent. It cannot be said that Dewey fails to show his faith by his words. His faith in human nature, in its capacity for development through education, for collective action through democracy, for making the world a different place in which to live, through art, is a cause of faith in others, as his works are examples to them. In the presence of John Dewey the most timid is ashamed to flinch, the least hopeful, to despair.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

General Hersey's Great Idea

> Our First Vice-President spends thousands a year of his own money checking up on the subversive influences not only in the United States but abroad. In his own investigations this year he has come across twenty-seven Communists' camps for youths, where they teach communistic and soviet doctrines. A regular morning rite in all of these camps is to throw the flag of the United States on the ground, tread on it, and as they file by this despoiled flag spit on it, and then assemble around a flag pole and raise the red flag of Communism. It is to meet such desecrations as this that this fund, to be raised for the National Defense Foundation, will be used, and also to raise the standard of American citizenship, wherever opportunity offers.

THUS writes Mr. Mark L. Hersey, Maj. Gen., U. S. A. (ret.), in a letter despatched last month to possible investors in the stock of the National Defense Life Insurance Company, of which General Hersey is secretary-treasurer. The General's news from the radical front would surely be depressing, were it not that his letter and the "literature" enclosed with it also describe a high-powered specific for this Red rush. In fact, General Hersey and a group of distinguished co-patriots have discovered the first and only guaranteed, sure-fire, double-action, reversible and infallible formula for combining patriotism with pecuniary profit—retaining the best features of each.

The National Defense Life Insurance Company, in brief, is to be a money-making concern; but with the money it makes it is to support an affiliated dependent, the National Defense Foundation, which is to meet desecrations and stimulate national defense and "raise the standard of American citizenship wherever opportunity offers."

This ingenious hook-up, as explained by General Hersey, Mr. R. E. Coontz, Rear Admiral, U. S. N. (ret.), and the almost equally eloquent but anonymous authors of other items in the literature mentioned, is perhaps worth a few moments of star-spangled attention.

Admiral Coontz, in an article credited to the Fleet Reserve Bulletin, describes the birth of the big idea. It was ushered into the world, with some lack of privacy, at a conference of the leaders of thirty-seven patriotic societies, held March 3, 1929, at Washington, D. C. Presumably after going over the desecration situation thoroughly, these leaders arrived at two conclusions: first, that there was a vital necessity for financing a Foundation to meet desecrations; and secondly, that a life insurance company would constitute an ideal source of supply. The worth of these conclusions is indicated by the fact that the presiding officer that day was Mrs. William Sherman Walker, vice-president of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Admiral Coontz, in his article, throws light upon the considerations which lie behind the second conclusion:

> Life insurance is the only business, in my opinion, that it would be safe to hook up with the national defense and patriotic movement. The cause is too sacred to be associated with any speculative or uncertain venture.

It will be remembered that the divine providence that safeguards our national destinies was functioning smoothly last March, the month of Mr. Hoover's inauguration. This country has never found a group of citizens more swift to the call of the nation's need; and in five days the National Defense Life Insurance Company was incorporated. Admiral Coontz became president. Mr. H. A. Jung, Chicago capitalist and presumably the itinerant and free-spending patriot mentioned in General Hersey's letter, took the first vice-presidency.

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American womanhood was given flattering recognition by the election of Mrs. A. J. Brosseau, former president-general of the D. A. R., as second vice-president, and through the appointment of Mrs. William Sherman Walker as one of the trustees.

Such, it appears, was the beginning. Now, full-fledged and with the National Defense Foundation under its wing, the insurance company offers every patriot a chance to make his investment serve two masters: himself and God. For 10 percent of the first premium of every policy sold by the Life Insurance Company will go to the National Defense Foundation.

And if any patriotic investor or any investing patriot thinks that this is not a reciprocating charity, let him read what General Hersey has to say about it:

> This [the 10 percent] will, in a way, be a tax on the commission of our solicitors for insurance, but they get in return an easy and ready approach to everyone in this country who is interested in National Defense as well as Home Defense. Admiral Gregory, General Fries, General Reilly, Mrs. Wm. Sherman Walker, Vice-President General of the D. A. R., Mrs. Mary Spence, President, World War Mothers, have accepted places on this foundation. The coördination of these two legal entities insure [*sic*] our agents a lead or introduction to a possible clientele of 95,000,000, which is the estimated number of people who believe in preserving our country through strength instead of trusting to weakness.

The cats eat the rats, and the rats eat the cats, and the investor gets the pelts. The more cats, the more rats, and the more rats, the more cats. And the more cats, always, the more pelts for the cat-and-rat-ranch investor. The patriots buy life insurance from the Company. The Company taxes itself to support the Foundation, and the Foundation goes out and creates more patriots. More patriots, more profits. More profits, more patriots. And so on in a great and benevolent circle, not only *ad infinitum*, or *ad nauseam*, but also *ad gloriam Dei*.

The literature points out that $100 invested in the stock of an old-line insurance company in 1902 is now estimated to be worth $21,000. What may we not expect of $100 invested in stock of the National Defense Life Insurance Company, that begins life with a potential clientele of 95,000,000 patriots—and a sure-fire endless chain that assures it an ever-increasing reservoir of "prospects"?

For the first time in history, the small investor and the lesser patriot are offered opportunity to derive dividends from Americanism—legally, openly, safely, and under the auspices of leadership so eminent as to rob the process of any suspicion of what is vulgarly known as patrioteering.

And to the nation at large, to public causes of every type, the implications of this merger are most important. For the nation it must signalize the final triumph of National Defense, the last confusion of the pacifist, and the final release of the professional American from the poverty-ridden helplessness that has hitherto made him a prey to so many phobias.

Admiral Coontz puts it in a nutshell:

> The National Defense Life Insurance Company will be a powerful patriotic organization in itself. With thousands of trained agents selling National Defense life insurance, it will have a corps of men preaching national defense as a means of their livelihood.
>
> The policy-holders of the company will in effect become members of an active National Defense organization [he continues]. In order to induce the policy-holders to continue their insurance, the officers and agents of the company must keep up their interest in national defense. As a sound business proposition the officers and agents of the company must preach national defense to the policy-holders, if they expect to earn dividends for the stockholders.
>
> Only through producing funds for the National Defense Foundation *and dividends for the stockholders* can the National Defense Insurance Company be a power in the patriotic and national defense movement, and thus reach its objective.

To every cause requiring funds, this merger offers the final formula for success. With a benediction from Mr. Kresge, the W. C. T. U. has only to form a national five-and-ten-cent-store chain—the prohibitionists making profits and the profits making more prohibitionists. Mr. Raskob has only to establish the Democracy in control of his new investment trust—devoting dividends to Democrats, and Democrats to dividends. It is high time that God and Mammon clasped hands on this proposition that coöperation beats competition four ways from the ace.

Even General Hersey's spitting Communists might adapt this formula to the needs of their cause. With twenty-seven camps and a new American flag to be provided every day for every camp, they must have a terrible overhead. Or perhaps it should be called an underfoot.

EDDY ORCUTT.

For a Somewhat Strange Sadness

You need not tell me, I know more surely than by words
How it is with you because of alien wounds—
I have watched in the reeds with the hunters of water-birds.

I have gone with the hunters at the breaking of light,
I have waited with them by water motionless
Save for the stirring of reflected flight.

I have been with the hunters when more than flight was slain;
I have seen the wild duck fall on innocent water,
And the changed crystal, and the spreading, clear stain.

MARIE DE L. WELCH.

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Mr. Borsodi Replies

In The New Republic of July 17, 24 and 31 of this year, there appeared a series of articles by Mr. Ralph Borsodi, under the general title, "One Way Out." In these articles Mr. Borsodi discussed the theories which he practises successfully in his country home near New York City: these theories center around the home manufacturer of many types of goods which are customarily bought from factories. The New Republic has published a number of letters from its readers criticizing Mr. Borsodi's plan, and has referred numerous others to him without publication. The following article is intended as a general answer to all of these.—THE EDITORS.

THE quest of comfort is a drama. It might be called the tragedy of civilized man. The whole earth is the stage upon which it is played. The history of civilization records the acts of the play. The accumulated wealth of mankind is the properties used by the players.

Three types of actors have played parts in it and still tread the boards: herd-minded types, quantity-minded types, and quality-minded types.

No such way of living as I have sought to describe in the pages of The New Republic is necessary to the happiness of the herd-minded. They can accustom themselves to any kind of life and accept its advantages and disadvantages with an almost bovine indifference.

Nor is it necessary to the quantity-minded. They are too well able to take care of themselves, no matter what the rules of the game of living by which they are confronted.

But some such way is necessary to the quality-minded, who find it difficult in our factory-dominated civilization to achieve the independence which is essential if they are to express their innermost selves and so make those contributions to mankind which alone assuage the comedy and tragedy of life.

For the beauty or ugliness of a civilization—the condition of its culture, the state of its society, and the richness or poverty of the life of the individuals in it—is determined by the parts played in that civilization by these three types of individuals—by the position accorded to quality-minded individuals and the extent to which they are able to impose their ideas upon the others. Where the quality-minded play the leading part, you have a beautiful civilization. Where the quantity-minded play the leading part, you have an ugly civilization. Where the herd-minded play the leading part, you have no civilization at all.

In passing judgment upon my ideas, which have been happily described as *one* way out, the real problem which I have sought to solve should not be overlooked while questioning some of the details of what I have recommended. It is, after all, only *one* way out. No doubt there are others. But to me no way of living which involves acceptance of the present regime, or devotion to reforming it, seems to meet both the needs of the individual and of society as a whole.

There are only three things we can do: accept our factory-dominated life and suffer spiritual frustration; fight it and crucify ourselves in trying to reorganize it; or make ourselves as independent of it as we can. Economic independence on a homestead of our own may not assure our making significant contributions in art, science, and philosophy, but it would at least furnish society with a pattern of superior living at the same time that it relieved us of the insecurity and the insignificant labors which are inescapable concomitants of our present system of production and distribution.

Most of the criticisms which have been leveled at the scheme of living I have advocated may be classified as questions either of desirability, or practicability. The questions as to desirability themselves fall into two divisions: desirability from the standpoint of the individual, and desirability from the standpoint of society. I shall try to answer them under these three heads.

Perhaps the most frequent question concerning practicability is how the average family of today, which is without real capital to begin with, can obtain a home and furnish it with the machines which are essential to produce a standard of living as high as that to which it is accustomed. How can it buy all the equipment over and above real estate which it will need if it is to produce for itself? It is difficult enough now to save. How is the family to make the larger outlays required to build a productive home and equip it with the full complement of domestic machines necessary if drudgery is to be eliminated?

There is a short and convincing answer which can be made to this question: *It has been done.* And it can be done by every family able to save *some* money, and intelligent, adventurous, and unconventional enough to devise other habits of living than those to which they are now accustomed. Some money must be saved—enough for the initial payments on land and houses, or for the land only if the home is to be built. The balance needed can be borrowed from such agencies as building and loan associations; and the equipment and machinery can be purchased a little at a time upon the in-

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stalment plan and paid for out of the savings which domestic production makes possible. For if the investments in house, in garden, in poultry and livestock, in orchard, in equipment and machinery of all kinds are productive, there need be no hesitation about using credit in order to purchase them. For, unlike expenditures for consumption goods, these figuratively cost nothing. They pay for themselves, for their maintenance, for their depreciation, in precisely the same way that properly selected and properly operated machinery in the factory pays for itself. The great difference between them is that the net dividend which can be secured from investment in domestic machinery is so much larger than can be secured from factory machinery.

This brings me to another important aspect of practicability: whether there actually is such a saving.

It is difficult to answer this question with scientific exactness because of the impossibility of taking all the factors involved into account. For instance, when we buy factory-made products, we think of their cost as being the price which we pay for them. Yet their complete cost must include not only the indirect social costs, which it is utterly impossible to compute, but the time which we have to spend shopping, the cost of car fare or automobiling to the shopping district, and often the time to exchange them when they are the wrong size or when they prove unsatisfactory for some reason or other. Many women who see only the price they pay for what they buy overlook the fact that they often spend more time shopping for a dress than would be required to make that dress at home.

The bare price of the factory-made product does, however, furnish a rough index of its economic cost, and if this is compared with the cost of producing a similar product at home, some idea of the saving may be secured. Stuart Chase refers to one of Mrs. Borsodi's experiments along this line in his book "Men and Machines." We use considerable quantities of floor-wax at "The Dogwoods." We used to pay from three to five dollars a gallon for it and never knew what we were getting for our money. As a matter of fact, the most expensive advertised waxes seemed to be of the poorest quality. So Mrs. Borsodi obtained the formula of the Bureau of Standards for floor-wax and proceeded to make her own. In the controlled experiment, in spite of the fact that she bought beeswax at the local drug-store and paid a much higher price than was necessary for pharmaceutical quality, the finished wax cost only $1.50 per gallon, including fifty cents an hour for wages for the maid who mixed it.

Such experiments, duplicated on all sorts of items which are included in the average family budget, make me feel justified in saying that it is possible with domestic production to save from one-quarter to three-quarters of present expenditures on more than half of the purchases made. Assuming the same money-income, before and after adventuring into home-production, at least in the beginning of the adventure, then it becomes possible to pay for the home and machinery out of savings which the home alone makes possible. And once the home and machinery are paid for, it makes it possible to live, on a smaller income, just as comfortably as on the larger one we had been compelled to earn before.

For quality-minded men and women, however, no reduction in money-income is necessary, even though the time devoted to earning money is reduced. On the contrary, there may be an actual increase in money-income. For the independence which such a life affords returns its largest dividend to the individual through increased bargaining-power in selling his services.

One of the outstanding criticisms as to desirability for the individual concerns the part which women would be required to play in such a scheme of living.

In the ideal productive home, home-making would be the joint adventure of the entire family. The home would furnish useful and satisfying work to every member of the family, and the woman would not have to endure the isolation which is her lot in the modern home. In transition homes, however, most of the time of the man would be spent away from home, earning money, while most of the time of the woman would be spent at home. This prospect, which they do not see is transitional, seems to irritate many women, especially those who like to think of themselves as modern, and who resent what seems to them a reversion to the injustices and hardships which were women's lot before the factory came along and presumably emancipated womankind.

Because of the glamor of adventure which has been thrown about the woman who is able to work outside of the home, we tend to forget that the making of a home is not only a career but a creative career of the highest order.

Home-making is an art. It is the evocation of a beautiful environment out of more kinds of elements than are involved in any other form of self-expression.

The militant feminist repudiates all of this not because it is untrue but because she fails to see that most of the jobs and so-called careers offered to women by the factory-dominated world involve work that has nothing to recommend it but the febrile excitement of working in a crowd and making numerous "contacts." Great numbers of women work in laundries, in canneries, in garment factories, in restaurants. The militant feminist is blind to the fact that specialization upon a single part of one of the tasks which used to occupy women in productive homes involves an actual degradation of their work. Most working women devote themselves to blind-alley jobs, just as do most men. The more objectively the activities of these types of men and women are viewed, the harder it is to consider abandonment of home-making a progress.

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It is not for these job-holding women, however, but for the careerist women that the militant feminist most strongly resents a program which seems to involve abandonment of cherished ambitions, surrender to a narrow field of activities, and condemnation to a lifetime of drudgery. The answer to this need not be elaborated. The productive home, since it makes for a larger leisure and involves less nerve-wracking strain, makes it possible for men and women to realize more worth-while ambitions than is possible if they dedicate their lives to the mechanized routines of our modern industrial behemoth.

Concerning the social desirability of the nonconformity and the individualistic spirit which are implicit in such a life as I have advocated, I would like to make one point.

Civilization becomes beautiful in the degree to which those who are capable of contributing beauty are free to express themselves. To some degree all have something beautiful to contribute. Even the most ordinary of mortals can create beauty, if given the opportunity and furnished the proper patterns of conduct, through the home, while functioning as providers and parents. But those who have something exceptional to contribute, those whom nature has endowed with greater powers than are possessed by most men and women, must be free to express themselves fully not only for their own sake but for the sake of mankind.

It is here that the constraint, which is imposed by this factory-dominated civilization upon the exceptional types amongst us, inflicts the greatest of injuries both upon the individuals of talent and upon civilization itself. For they are made to produce not what they would like to create but what a factory civilization can utilize. They are either prevented from expressing themselves altogether, or their contributions are so perverted that they find themselves actually adding to the ugliness which is all about them. Teachers are made to teach what they know is not worth teaching; scientists to discover what they know is not worth discovering; artists to adorn what they know is not worth adorning; writers to write what they know is not worth saying.

If the quality-minded continue to permit the factory to chain them into repetitive routines; if they continue to earn their livings in ways which prevent them from expressing the best that is in them; if they continue to sacrifice their intellectual and artistic integrity upon the altar of unending production, then we shall have a new dark age. If they do not free themselves for creative living, society will first ossify, and then collapse into darkness. The body will live on, but its brain will cease to function. Darkness will come on for all—for the quality-minded, for the quantity-minded, and for the herd-minded.

RALPH BORSODI.

Washington Notes

WITH the departure of Mr. MacDonald, the Washington show has resumed its normal and human aspect. For a solid week, every governmental and political pore exuded love, trust and purity. Politicians of all parties and factions were engaged in appearing noble and unselfish. Ignoble and unpleasant things were pushed aside or covered up, and the Capital atmosphere was saturated with peaceful prayers. Compliments, kind words and coöperation constituted the menu for MacDonald week. It was a pretty picture we held up for the British Prime Minister, who has returned home with his broad Scotch bosom full of appreciation and with hope high in his heart that the London conference will result in action greatly advancing civilization toward permanent peace, and incidentally, politically benefiting the Labor government of which he is the honored head. Moreover, these hopes seem fairly well founded.

It is plain that Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Hoover would not go as far as they have without being perfectly sure they can and will go much farther. In other words, taking the purely personal and political view, neither Mr. Hoover nor Mr. MacDonald can afford not to have the London conference a concrete and conceded success. It would plainly be politically injurious to both should it fizzle. There will, of course, be considerable technical controversy at the conference and the usual number of seemingly insuperable obstacles will be presented by the French and Italians, but in the end—through Anglo-American determination and coöperation, the old "will to win" stuff—the agreement will be reached and the gathering will close with everybody's arms around everybody else's shoulders and all singing "Onward Christian Soldiers," or some other hymn of peace in which the genial Jap can join.

I am not trying to be either cynical or funny about this conference. The idea makes me feel noble and affectionate like the rest. All I am trying to say is that Mr. Hoover and Mr. MacDonald have "framed" it in advance. Its success is practically assured, for the simple reason that both the British Prime Minister and the American President are much too intelligent to have dramatized the preliminary steps in this business in any such colorful, impressive and elaborate way, without knowing exactly how and where they are coming out. I am a simple-minded and unsophisticated person, but my conviction is that in every essential feature agreement has already been reached, and that nearly all chance of failure has been eliminated. Not to have done so would obviously have been stupid. Appreciation of this, I fear, is going to prevent my getting much kick out of the coming conference.

However, all that is three months away, and the immediate show in Washington is more interesting though less important. With the departure of Mr. MacDonald, the Shearer-shipbuilders investigation, which had been adjourned in order to be polite and noble in the presence of our distinguished guest, was reopened by the Shortridge committee. An inquiry into lobbying generally, instigated by the sharp-tongued Caraway, is under way, but will not,

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I think, get very far, though it will provide the "corps of correspondents" with some very good copy. That, by the way, seems to me to be its main purpose. The tariff bill limps sickishly along, with the regular Republicans disheartened, squabbling among themselves and in general giving an exhibition of ineptitude and incapacity hard to match. On the general subject of tariff legislation, I can report that since last week the prospects for final action on this bill at this session have considerably diminished. White House spokesmen who belong to the medicine-ball circle now openly say the bill cannot pass before November 30. It seems to me they are probably right. What I think I pointed out as a possibility in this place more than a month ago has happened—the high-protection, regular Republicans have themselves lost zest for the measure and do not really care now whether it goes through or not. This is because they realize the air-tight nature of the Democratic-Progressive coalition, which makes it impossible for the bill to go through in any shape even approximately satisfactory to the industrial lobby. As soon as this became too obvious to be longer doubted, their fighting spirit began to ooze. A serious effort to drop the whole business and adjourn actually came from certain regular Republicans who were with difficulty persuaded to continue what to them has become a very discouraging and futile fight.

To drop the bill themselves, however, would have been not only a complete confession of incompetency but the rottenest sort of politics. It would have presented the Democrats with an issue almost as good as the passage of a bad bill. They could charge that, rather than give agriculture the protection it needs, and disappointed at their inability to get what they wanted for the already fatly protected industrialists, the regular Republican leaders had scuttled their own bill. Clearly, the regulars could not afford to bear that sort of allegation if it could be proved. Clearly, if the bill is to die, their only way out is to place the blame for its murder upon the Democratic-Progressive combination. That now is their idea. From now on, the Watson-Reed-Smoot effort will be to show that deliberate Democratic delay is responsible for its failure. Naturally, the Democrats will maneuver so as to prevent this burden being laid in their laps. With knowledge that a bill bad enough to give them an issue cannot be passed, the Democratic belief is that the next best thing from the party standpoint is no bill. Their movement is along that line, but they do not of course want to be caught at it. Altogether, things in the Senate are in an unsanitary mess, and to my untutored mind it seems a situation to justify a real statement from the White House. Moreover, I believe that before long one will come. I hold to this belief, not in the least because of any inside information, but merely because it is inconceivable that this session will be permitted to go to its sloppy and ridiculous end without one. To my way of thinking, Mr. Hoover will be forced to speak out in a pretty emphatic way before the close. Not to do so will saddle at least part of the blame for these wasted months on his shoulders. Perhaps if he succeeds in his disarmament, World Court, and tax-reduction program during the regular session, it will not make much difference. On the other hand it seems absurd not to speak—and I think he will.

Washington. T. R. B.

The German and the American Play

Karl and Anna, by Leonhard Frank, translated by Ruth Langner. Guild Theater, October 7, 1929.

Strictly Dishonorable, by Preston Sturges. Avon Theater, September 18, 1929.

THE German play with which the Theater Guild opens its twelfth season has come off disastrously, for rather important reasons.

"Karl and Anna," as everyone knows by now, is a dramatic version of the well known novel, a version made by the author himself, which may account somewhat for the fact that so much that is intended is left out. It is only too natural that the author of a book, when he sets out to put the substance of it into dramatic form, should take for granted that more of the book's idea is in the play than actually gets there. All through the performance of "Karl and Anna" you are conscious of a feeling that this or that was implied, this mystical or subtle quality intended, this undercurrent of meaning, this mood or quiet flight. But in the actual speeches, written by the dramatizer, very little of such import is set down.

This, however, was only a part of the trouble. In the production the implied qualities, even, were lost most of the time. In the first act, for instance, certainly some great loneliness was meant, with those two men in the Russian prison camp, on some terrible plain, shut in, forgotten, turning to each other with gentle intimacies, Richard telling his friend the last secrets of his life with Anna, his wife, Karl risking his life for Richard. But what we saw at the Guild was mostly brutality, ructions, passionate suggestion and a kind of pseudo-war-horror. In the second act, when Karl comes and Anna accepts him, not as Richard, who has been reported dead long ago, but as the lover destined for her from the beginning of the world, there was an impression of genuine emotion but of little behind it, very little of the poignant illusion, human dream or divine fatality. In the last act when the letter comes from Richard, and the chance of his arriving at any moment is at hand, and Anna has to make her choice, and is to go with Karl or die or whatever must be, nothing happens at all except that Mr. Frank Conroy is irresistibly comic in his make-up, which resembled one of those Russian toys of a Merry Mujik, and rather overwhelmingly bad in his acting, the badness of an intelligent player, not very talented but highly sensitive to dramatic value and ideas, who knows that visual impersonation as such is not in his line and that the scene he works in is flat, specious and exacting.

The framework of a pathetic depth is undoubtedly there in the last act of this play, but in the absence of any lines of much consequence or any compelling rhythm of dramatic themes and motives, the burden falls on the acting, and only the most beautiful and intense innerness and spiritual resource among the players could create the necessary result.

This connects with another fatal point: all through the performance there is a tedious slowness, a kind of sententious timing, as if the lines were very important and every-

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thing artistic with a capital letter. In this sort of acting these time intervals might be supported by the dialogue and drama in hand. But there is little dialogue that exacts of its performers this reverence or this dirge of the muses. What is really necessary is that the intervals should proceed from inside the characters, that the actor should draw out of himself the utmost depth and intensity of life. From this quivering source within him, and out of the echoes of his own feeling, he gives the shining substance that creates his scene. Or at least we may say that, whatever else happens outwardly, a current must be maintained among the characters, a *rapport* established, a flow and undercurrent and exchange kept going. But what happened in this performance of "Karl and Anna" was that, save in the cases of Miss Brady and Mr. Kruger, not even the simple transitions were achieved—in the opening of the second act, for instance, where the two women talk, Miss Ruth Hammond's Marie did not even seem to connect with her own remarks as one followed another, and none of them got as far as Anna. It was this lack of flow in the acting, plus this specious time stressing, that did most to keep the play from any convincing reality.

Mr. Otto Kruger as Karl gave a sincere performance, somewhat overcome with the import of the theme, Teutonically serious, but closer to the dramatist's intentions than anything else about the evening. Miss Alice Brady gave an excellent performance, not for the end the author intended, she could hardly do that, but for the role as it stands in the lines written for her. It was a clear, well graded and genuine piece of work.

Mr. Jo Mielziner's setting for the first scene, the prisoner's dug-out, had an obvious sordidness but small dramatic value. His other scene, that of Anna's room, was good, especially with regard to the furniture, for which this designer has such a knack.

In all the season so far, the pleasantest and most promising event is Mr. Preston Sturges' play that Mr. Brock Pemberton has brought to the Avon. For one thing, it is an American piece, something not necessary, of course, but agreeable to contemplate. It is also an engaging comedy which, after a first few lagging moments, goes happily through to the very end. It brings us fresh material, fresh not because it has never been used before, but because it is used freshly—I mean the Southernness of the heroine, which is not only freshly painted but also is woven into the dramatic texture of the play. And finally it discovers more securely to Broadway a young actress who can play both charmingly and sincerely at the same time, who has a sense of playing with the people around her on the stage, a good time-sense for her speeches, and a genuine sense of comedy. No recent newcomer has given a performance so well studied and so engaging.

The title of "Strictly Dishonorable," with its cynical town implications, is not at all apt to this play, which is sentimental and romantic comedy all through. It begins with an engaged couple, he from Orange, New Jersey, and she from Yokum, Mississippi, coming into an Italian speakeasy, where the drinking judge and the Italian tenor have upstairs apartments. The fiancé is tight, bullying, dry, nasal and unlovable. The tenor comes, the girl has heard him at the Metropolitan. She falls in love with him at sight. The fiancé snarls, goes out, gets entangled with the policeman, a friend of the judge's; the tenor invites the girl to his room to visit there as long as she likes. In the second scene the comedy turns on her innocence, her love for him, the other ladies' calls for him on the telephone, the girl's determination to go the limit and take the consequences, her fear, her instincts about true love, the Italian's final high ground, when her virgin freshness and infatuation have overcome him. He leaves her furious and goes to pass the night in the judge's apartment. The third act keeps up the comedy, the genuine emotional content, the stage manipulations, and brings at last the cable from the Italian mother, giving her consent to the marriage but denying the existence of any such perfect being as that in her son's message; it brings also a repentant fiancé from Orange and shows his ugly nature again, so ugly that the last curtain with the girl in the tenor's arms seems more than right and happy.

The minor roles of "Strictly Dishonorable," though cast—a fashion now prevalent—so much more than close to type that they are almost the actual characters instead of being the performers, are excellent. Mr. William Ricciardi, Mr. John Altieri and Mr. Marius Rogati as the program calls them—Guglielmo, Giovanni and Mario—may or may not be good actors, they are very good indeed as the speakeasy *padrone,* his lookout and his waiter. Mr. Carl Anthony's judge, especially in his last scenes, is fair enough, and Mr. Tullio Carminati as the tenor is always agreeable. He is evidently not a very talented actor and has a poor speaking voice, but he is of course suited to the character, he understands the things in the tenor's head, he keeps his part going. And Mr. Edward J. McNamara's policeman is perfect.

The best thing about this new comedy is the way in which, within an old stage frame, Mr. Preston Sturges has put real understanding and sound qualities of character. The course of the tenor is the usual one, but the basis of his Italian reaction and conceptions is secure and right, and really interlocks with the Southern nature of the girl he is made to fall in love with. It is fine, also, to see the way in which the dramatist has used this Southernness to bring into play his motives for the situation's heroine. She might have done what she did because she was bold, forward, up-to-date, or loose, or crude or all suppressed desire or revolted daughter or what not. But what makes her so easily do as she does is her natural friendliness, her lack of suspicion about people, her candor and her delicate, shrewd, pathetic and winning rusticity, not to speak of her pretty voice—Miss Muriel Kirkland's Southern accent comes a bit short still, but she gets the voice and intonation very often. In the writing of this part the dramatist has gone pretty high up on the comedy ladder, and that without smartyness or current clichés.

Anybody who cares for the theater must remember that we owe Mr. Pemberton thanks for some courageous ventures, the most notable of which were the Pirandello plays, which reached America through him. His fortunes, which began some years ago with a play about an Italian soprano —"Enter Madame"—now rise, with one about an Italian tenor, to the most richly deserved success of the new season.

STARK YOUNG.

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CORRESPONDENCE

The Chinese Famine

SIR: The report of the American Red Cross Commission, headed by Ernest P. Bicknell, on the China famine, as summarized in the New York Times, September 28, 1929, gives an erroneous impression both of famine conditions and of the general situation in China today.

(1) We are told that as a result of "the abundant rainfall, conditions in the principal famine areas are rapidly improving." No reference is made, however, to the millions of starving people in the provinces of Shensi and Kansu, of Western Honan, in half of the large district called Suiyan, and in large parts of Charhar, where there have been no rains.

(2) The depredations of war lords in large areas of China are truly pictured but the report gives us no clear understanding that these conditions are the inevitable accompaniment of the breakdown of the old imperial regime and the birth of a new great nation. The plans, character, achievements and hopeful prospects of the present Nationalist government are practically ignored. Able foreign advisors, such as Dr. Edwin Kemmerer, Advisor to the Minister of Finance; Mr. J. J. Maretell, former Vice-President of the Erie Railroad, Advisor to the Minister of Railroads, and Mr. H. K. Murphy, the architect building the new capital, are enthusiastic over the outlook, aims and personnel of the present government. No mention is made also of the fact, vouched for by the American China Famine Relief, that this present Nationalist government, in spite of its colossal difficulties and financial stringency, has contributed $30,000,000 to famine relief.

(3) The fact that "conditions do not present a situation which can adequately be dealt with by a foreign emergency relief agency" is given as a reason for America's greatest relief agency to do nothing. The work of the International Famine Relief Commission and the America China Famine Relief, however, shows clearly that effective relief can be given. Already $620,000 has been expended by the latter in giving seed grain, in direct free relief, in the employment of those in famine areas on constructive road building enterprises and in the selling of grain at reduced prices. Relief has been afforded to tens of thousands at the average cost of 60 cents per month per person.

(4) The Red Cross report assumes that the giving of American funds will lessen the efforts on the part of the Chinese to help themselves. Chinese psychology, however, brings about just the opposite result. In the cities of North China, properly conducted foreign-controlled orphanages, homes for the aged and out-door relief activities have resulted in the improvement of Chinese institutions of a similar nature and in a wider social interest on the part of the Chinese.

(5) The mention of the misappropriation of certain native funds, coupled with the false and damaging press reports of last spring regarding the misdirection of foreign funds (later retracted) have combined to give the impression that American famine funds are not being properly spent. The fact of the case is that in the entire work of the International Famine Relief Commission and of the expenditure of the present American China Fund there can be found only one reliable instance of this sort. In one area $113 worth of grain was "stolen" by starving Chinese who raided one of the famine offices.

(6) The perplexing population problem of China is dealt with in a summary and thoroughly unscientific manner. We are told that "China's population will be double its present total by the end of this century, unless the normal increase is checked by famine, epidemics and wars."

The problem, however, is not so simple. The birth rate in China, it is true, is probably the highest in the world and the death rate nearly equals it. The best figures indicate that there has been little increase in China's population for several generations. No doubt the coming of modern sanitation and modern medical science will tend to increase the survival rate. But it should not be forgotten that the principal cause of this high rate is a religious one—a desire to have sons to worship the ancestors. Modern education and industry are, however, undermining the power of the clan and the ancient religious sanctions. Between six and seven million boys and girls are in modern schools and are turning from the past to a new type of life. Modern industry is drawing tens of thousands from the country villages to the cities, a movement which is effectively breaking up the social organization of ancient Chinese life. Literally millions are emigrating from congested areas to the fertile fields of Manchuria and Mongolia. We already have clear evidence that the real wage of the factory workers in Shanghai is much higher than that of the old craftsmen or the farmers, which indicates something of the change in the life of China that will accompany her further industrialism. The number of Chinese that will be alive in 2029 and the per capita wealth of these Chinese is at present a problem of pure speculation, not one for dogmatic statement.

It is unfortunate that at this crisis in the changing life of China, efforts in this country effectively to ameliorate suffering in a great neighboring nation should be deprecated by the American Red Cross. A generation or two generations from now, no doubt, the Chinese government and reorganized Chinese philanthropic agencies can handle their own difficulties, but not at present. It is to be hoped that in spite of the Red Cross report the American people will do their best to meet the challenge of need which Nationalist China presents.

JOHN STEWART BURGESS,
Professor of Sociology, Yenching
New York City. University, Peiping, China.

Mr. Borsodi's Way Out

SIR: As one of those who need no convincing that life lived in the open is the only life worth living, I would like to ask Mr. Borsodi two questions:

Could a family with an income of five thousand a year have swung his proposition? Certainly it is out of the question for a three thousand income. Yet—although this fact is steadily and consistently ignored by writers for either The New Republic, The Nation, or respectable periodicals generally, many more families in this prosperous country are below that income than above it.

Another question: Mr. Borsodi describes the extent of the area in which he looked for his farm. Supposing all New Yorkers were like-minded, how long would the daily commuting take?

The plan appears possible only for a minority—the very minority which suffers least from the evils of the city. A delightful scheme for "the better classes," it not only offers nothing to the masses, it calmly ignores their existence. Is that not true of most modern palliatives?

Moody, N. Y. JULIA PARKS.

SIR: Mr. Borsodi's attempt to "domesticate the machine" appears to be an expression of conservatism against the final victory of the Industrial Revolution. With the pioneer stage in the background, America is now experiencing an expansion of large-scale production that is making itself felt on every hand. It probably will become the accepted method in agriculture before long. It is perfectly natural to rebel against the sensation of being forced into a new economic system. But it is all probably a useless effort. It would be easer to mold that system to make it serve human values.

We cannot subscribe to the doctrine of economic determinism—but we must recognize that there is an economic limitation by which man must be guided. Mr. Borsodi seems to ignore that economic forces demand large-scale production. We cannot turn the hands of time backward. The home may have to become adapted to a new environment—and that is what is probably happening. We may regret the "good old days," but we cannot hope to live them again in this world. ROLLAND BRADLEY.

Houston, Texas.

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Veterans and Civil Service

SIR: On November 5 the first constitutional amendment on every ballot in New York State will concern veteran preference in all branches of the Civil Service. If the voters approve this amendment, a disabled veteran receiving a bare passing mark in any Civil Service examination, state or municipal, must be placed at the head of the eligible list, either for original appointment or for promotion. No distinction is made between those injured in actual combat or while serving in a clerical capacity or in a student training corps, nor between any type or degree of disability.

The Board of Directors of the Women's City Club has gone on record in opposition to this amendment, because they believe that adequate pensions and proper hospitalization should be our responsibility for all disabled veterans through the federal government, and that we should not minimize this direct responsibility through any weakening of the Civil Service in this state.

Sympathy for the splendid men and women who were wounded or disabled in our armies prompts all of us to urge the widest possible measure of assistance, but this aid should be given wisely and without stint. None is more mindful of the debt due to our soldiers, sailors and nurses than the women of the City Club, but they feel that as a simple matter of bookkeeping this debt should be paid out of one special account and not transferred blindly to another labelled "Civil Service." After 1866 our national sympathies for Civil War veterans led to indiscriminate preference for them in all varieties of employment with resultant difficulties which are only now diminishing. The Women's City Club believes that, rather than repeat this mistake in 1929, it would be wise to pay two salaries for one job—one to the disabled veteran and one to the fully qualified Civil Service employee—and not endure the economic loss sure to be occasioned by advancing handicapped or untrained persons to responsible positions.

New York City. ETHEL E. DREIER,
President.

For the Marion Strikers

SIR: This is an appeal for help for the Marion strikers which I had hoped I should not have to make again. It is so urgent that no one with any human feeling should stop reading at this point. I make it as chairman of the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York City.

As many of your readers know, the Emergency Committee was set up some years ago by the League for Industrial Democracy with the help of the American Civil Liberties Union to act as an industrial Red Cross, giving aid in those strikes where union funds are insufficient and where the Red Cross adheres to its hands-off policy. We have no office rent and no salaries save for actual secretarial service. We only function when there is an emergency. That emergency, alas, has become acute again at Marion, North Carolina. I need not remind your readers of the broken agreement, the bitter resentment of the workers, the sudden strike, the cruel or panic-stricken sheriff and the resultant massacre. Six victims have already died and others lie wounded in the hospital. There was not money enough to pay the bills which the hospital thrusts upon the wounded. Certainly there is not money enough to give the most meager relief to the five or six hundred strikers and their dependents who must look to generous folk for their daily bread.

If this strike in Marion—a strike for elementary honesty to compel an employer to keep an agreement that was almost wholly in his own favor—is defeated by hunger, it will add immeasurably to the already great bitterness engendered by the rapid industrialization of the South and the transformation of hill farmers into mill hands. I am sure that among your readers there will be many who want to give and to give promptly. We shall transmit relief without delay if it is sent to the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York City, of which Forrest Bailey is treasurer. Bishop Francis J. McConnell, President of the Federal Council of Churches, is a member of the Executive Committee and the National Executive Committee includes men and women of standing in the fields of social service, religion and labor.

New York City. NORMAN THOMAS.

"O City, Cities!"

SIR: Doubtless it would be idle to suggest to your reviewer, Mr. Edward Dahlberg, who has been at some pains to articulate, in your issue of October 2, his impressions of my book of poems, "O City, Cities!" that his use of the word "Imagist" to describe my poems is neither a very accurate nor a very well substantiated one, for the obscurities of his article are such that I am certain he, himself, must now regret them. I am deeply in sympathy with him, for his distress must be great on re-reading such bewildering sentences as these first two:

> A study of contemporary poetry, expecially that which falls into what we now choose to call very modern verse, is more an inquiry into personalities and human nature than one of structure. Not that the two necessarily need be divided, for *the converse is true.* (The italics are mine.)

Such obscurities are, however, Mr. Dahlberg's own. On the other hand, the lines which Mr. Dahlberg has quoted in his review are mine, and although they have undergone strange changes in passing through the discomfiting provinces of Mr. Dahlberg's mind, I am able still to retain exact remembrance of them as they were before they were perceived by him, and to offer their original image for comparison. For instance, the lines that Mr. Dahlberg, intent, no doubt, on proving that he is not in error in calling me an imagist, quotes as

> Bruxelles is:
> a night in midwinter—and a wind
> that screams along the boulevards
> like shattered women
> fleeing a bombarded town:

originally read

> Bruxelles:
> a night in midwinter—and a wind
> that screams along the boulevards
> like shattered women
> fleeing a bombarded town:

and the lines

> the drains
> reiterate the names of places
> names
> and dates
> that fill the mind to overflowing
> with regrets regrets and regrets

I can identify as my lines

> the drains
> reiterate the names of places
> names
> and dates
> that fill the mind to overflowing
> with regrets regrets and yet regrets.

In another passage Mr. Dahlberg chose to delete, without as much as a "by your leave," six complete lines. I quote the passage as it originally read:

> Bruges:
> I leave
> tomorrow:
> here air
> is filled with rarely sifted
> silence like a snow and drifting bells
> that are a deeper silence
> Here
> the middle ages
> stumbled and were lost—

Perhaps these corrections may appear to be evidence of ingratitude for a review that does not appear to be wholly ill-intended. May I, therefore, present my compliments to Mr. Dahlberg and express through you my gratitude to him for a thought that his review suggested to me? The thought is this: That far from poetry being an escape from large-lettered LIFE, perhaps Life is an escape from the more severe provinces of poetry.

New York City. R. ELLSWORTH LARSSON.

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Queen Elizabeth

Queen Elizabeth, by Katharine Anthony. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 263 pages. $4.

KATHARINE ANTHONY'S "Queen Elizabeth" is an essay and character study rather than an historical biography in the usual sense. Confronted by the obvious limitations of space, Miss Anthony wisely decided to abandon the chronological narrative of events which have been recited many times, and after a brief account of Elizabeth's early years leading up to her accession, she deals topically with the crucial instances which illustrate her heroine's character through her relations with others, with Leicester, with d'Alençon, with Burghley, with Philip II, Mary of Scotland, and Essex. Perhaps with the same desire to avoid well trodden paths she has suppressed almost completely such figures as Sir Philip Sidney and Sir Walter Raleigh. It is a note of originality that nowhere in these pages does Elizabeth intercept Sidney in his effort to join Drake on a cruise to America, or step on Raleigh's cloak to keep her feet out of the mud.

The larger political aspects of Elizabeth's reign Miss Anthony also ignores. The fundamental problems confronting English statesmanship in the last half of the sixteenth century included the forward movement of the Reformation, the reorganization of the English Church on the Genevan plan by the Puritans, the alignment of England with the Protestant powers of the Continent against the Catholic reaction, the checking of the conquest of the new world by Spain, and the establishment of the British empire. The fact that Elizabeth and her ministers, except Walsingham, did not see the future in its true proportions is the occasion of reproach somewhat similar to that which we pass on their successors at the close of the nineteenth century. But these matters did not touch Elizabeth as closely as did personal and dynastic considerations—self-preservation, self-expression, marriage, and the succession to the crown. Miss Anthony closes her book with the epigram: "Her reign was a marriage and the nation was her child." Whatever truth may be in this conclusion, it is scarcely to be deduced from the present study. Again, the great glory of Elizabethan England was its literature. Of this, unquestionably, the Queen was both an impelling force and an objective. Poetry and drama in Lyly, Sidney, and Spenser contributed to the richness and vivacity of the court, but it may be questioned whether they were a leading interest in Elizabeth's life. Miss Anthony does not believe they were. She does not mention Spenser, and of the drama she remarks: "An English play was produced before her, but did not make much impression. . . . She was too old to assist at this Titan birth and the presence chamber was too narrow for such a popular offspring." And finally, though Elizabeth lived in an age when religion was the chief concern of the world, she had no spiritual life. At fifteen, it is true, she wrote plaintively that she had a "soul to save as well as other folks," and at her death she kept the Archbishop of Canterbury praying for successive half-hour laps at her bedside, but between these ages her chief religious concerns were to keep the Catholics from conspiring against the throne, the Puritans from agitating against the bishops, and the bishops from getting married.

These omissions are not defects in the present volume. On the contrary, they testify to a principle of selection and exclusion held with extraordinary intelligence and persistence. It is altogether characteristic of Miss Anthony's complicated workmanship that Elizabeth herself, the woman born ... sity, set about with circumstances o... herself and others, raised to power of wh... tion of possession was to abstain from or to ... with a mind open to the incitements of the Rena... a body or a temperament which forbade complete ... expression. In this last particular, it would appear ... Miss Anthony has found a chief clue to the problem o... Elizabeth's behavior. In a sense her study of the Virgin Queen is complementary to her earlier work on Catherine the Great.

Whether Elizabeth's virginity was physical, temperamental, or political, is a matter of endless controversy. Of the fact itself there can be no reasonable doubt. Not only does the total sum of the testimony against it amount to a "not proven," which, in the fierce light that beat upon a throne in the sixteenth century is equivalent to innocence; but it may be safely asserted that a single successful lapse on Elizabeth's part would have been followed by such a career as would have entitled her to an indubitable place among the royal courtesans of history, with Semiramis and Cleopatra, Mary of Scotland and Catherine the Great. Virginity was the determining factor in the warp of Elizabeth's personal relations which were woven into the woof of statecraft set by her ministers. She was the rapidly shifting bobbin of the loom held in the hands of Burghley, Walsingham, and Robert Cecil. In Miss Anthony's study we are never allowed to lose sight of the bobbin, while the fabric grows under our eyes.

Elizabeth emerged from the nursery with the death of her father, Henry VIII. Under the dubious guardianship of her latest step-mother, she experienced the first trial of her adolescent affection through Sir Thomas Seymour, brother of the Protector, who, after vainly seeking her hand, married Henry's widow and became her step-father. At his hands she learned the lessons of coquetry, physical and mental, which she was to practise through life. With a precocious sense of self-preservation she realized that marriage with any of the ambitious noblemen who were speculating upon the reversion of the royal estate of the decaying Tudor family would reduce her to the status of pawn in the game which she was determined to dominate as queen —and expose her to the fate of other pawns, for example, Lady Jane Grey. This lesson was enforced when under Mary the effort was made to connect her with Wyatt's rebellion, which had as its objective her marriage to Edward Courtenay. She learned it so well that when she was confined in the Tower with Robert Dudley, whose brother, as Lady Jane Grey's husband, had died with his wife on the scaffold, the affection which grew between them at that time, while it eventuated in an intimacy that gave ground for scandal, never ripened into marriage.

The specter of a disputed succession to the throne haunted the English people with memories of the Wars of the Roses, and Elizabeth early determined never to be a disputant. With the instinct of delay which became a habit, she waited until her accession was undisputed. But then arose the question of her successor, and the perpetuation of the dynasty became involved with the statecraft of European alliances. The only great powers with which alliance was not a liability were Catholic—Spain, Austria, France—and these in turn offered candidates for her hand, Philip II, the Archduke Charles, and the Duc d'Alençon, among whom Elizabeth threaded her way with the same adroitness with which she had wound in and out of the meshes contrived for her in her girlhood by the great

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ry. Once more policy was com-
At least for d'Alençon she had some-
eling that Seymour and Leicester had
id not yield to it. Even to the end of
instinct as a woman was at odds with her
queen. In the case of Mary of Scotland her
l induced her, after eighteen years, to bring the
lry for the crown to an end; but though she signed the death warrant she sent to recall it, and punished those who executed it. In the case of Essex, who furnished the last personal episode of her life, she preserved the succession for "our cousin of Scotland" by sending to the block the man she loved—again in an agony of reluctance. Once more she signed the death warrant of a pretender to the throne, but she hoped up to the last for some excuse to delay or recall its execution.

In exposing the character of Elizabeth through her behavior toward those who stood nearest to her, Miss Anthony has given lively portraits of these companions. She is least successful in the case of Mary of Scotland, but Mary demands to be presented in a solar system of her own, not as a satellite upon whom the rays of the Elizabethan sun fell distantly and coldly. Essex as a portrait leaves something to be desired. Surely Miss Anthony is mistaken in treating his claim to the crown by descent from Edward III as negligible, and the sentence in which he is compared both to Hamlet and Werther must have fallen from her pen in a moment of somnolence. But she is right in attributing his fall to his friends both in their passive and active roles. Of Sir Thomas Seymour, Lord Admiral, who with the privilege of a step-father used to come to Elizabeth's adolescent chamber every morning, and, when his wife was present, "tickled my Lady Elizabeth in bed," we have a perfect sketch, important for the interpretation of Elizabeth's sexual abnormality. Of Leicester, Miss Anthony gives a more favorable view than does conventional history. She credits him with sincerity both in love and in religion. Of Burghley and Walsingham we have excellent contrasting portraits—Burghley, a Greek scholar, an Englishman who never forsook his island, sedate, methodical, careful, a latitudinarian who took his religion indifferently from each successive master or mistress, who restricted his enthusiasm to business and the treasury; Walsingham, a modernist, a traveler, a linguist—active, versatile, fanatic, a Puritan Jesuit, who opposed an ambitious foreign policy to the cautious playing safe of the Queen. Of his relations with Elizabeth Miss Anthony says:

> Elizabeth hated Walsingham, and small wonder. His Machiavellian tactics did not include flattery. He was blunt and honest on the surface, uncourtierlike in his address. His lack of grace and polish and his stern consistency were equally detestable to the Queen. While she only swore at Burghley, she threw her slipper at Walsingham's face. She would have liked to murder him many a time for a devotion that was so unfailing and so impersonal. He was ready to lie, cheat and torture for her sake, but never to frame a compliment or bandy repartee. In subtle but merciless ways he knew how to put the screws on her. It is a question, whether, in the last years of his life, he did not force great issues and precipitate decisions of great historic import—things for which Queen Elizabeth takes all the praise and blame in history.

This passage may stand as an example of Miss Anthony's intelligent handling of her material, and of her graceful, spirited style.

R. M. L.

Reveries and Surprises

Relics and Angels, by Hamilton Basso. New York: The Macaulay Company. $2.50.

THIS first novel, by a young man in New Orleans, is rather immaturely conceived and rather vaguely constructed, but it has a grace, a charm and a distinction which seem to mark the author as an artist rather than as just another young man who has written a novel. It is one of those lively lyrical varied books, like "This Side of Paradise," which are written to get down the sensations and incidents of youth, before the artist has sufficiently developed to understand how to grasp and treat a subject. Mr. Basso has tried to grasp a subject—the maladjustment, in a Southern city, of a young man of Latin stock, who has an ambition to become a bacteriologist, but is obliged to work in the family shoe-manufacturing business. But Mr. Basso's real subject is the romanticism of youth, and he is still, evidently, too much submerged in this romanticism to know what point of view to take toward it. His ending is tragic-romantic and, it seems to me, more or less preposterous. But in the meantime, we have been touched and entertained by the panorama of the delights, the despairs, the loves, surprises, and reveries of youth.

The principal influences apparent in "Relics and Angels" are Sherwood Anderson and Joyce. The sober melancholy cadence of Stephen Dedalus's mind is heard in the hero's meditations in the early part of the book. Mr. Basso has, however, something which is of fine quality and distinctively his own—a light precise impressionism, a gift of images at once easy and unexpected. Here is Tony, Mr. Basso's hero, coming for the first time to the office where he is to work:

> There were doors and rails and rows of girls at typewriter-desks and when Robert, who made a point of being surly, hooked his neck to give direction to his words, the syllables went dancing past Tony's astonished ears like the tail of a kite.
>
> "I said who wants to see him."
>
> To answer "Who the devil wants to know?" would have been the introduction of a hostile kitetail, glassy cutters, a swoop of friction hardly compatible with the rest of it, so he kept his peace.
>
> "Anthony Clezac."

Here is Grand Isle, in the Gulf of Mexico:

> He put on his shoes and walked down to the beach. There was no moon but all the stars were out. They hung in the sky like the burst of a rocket that had frozen there.
>
> Crabs were washed up by the waves. They scuttled along the beach, racing on spiders' legs. He was filled with an insane hate of them. He picked up a stick and struck viciously at them. The stick was wet. It clung to his hand.
>
> The long stare of a lighthouse reached into the sky. It melted near the frozen stars. He hurled the stick at it.
>
> "Get away, you bastardly light," he shouted. "Get the hell away from here."

And here is a love scene among the canebrakes and nigger cottages of the Louisiana countryside:

> For a moment, as she stood there with tightened mouth and her blue eyes very cold and harsh, they were on the verge of a quarrel. But a flock of geese,

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flying to the marshes from the rigors of a snowbound north, honked in the sky above them, and when they had gone, necks outstretched from easy wings, the tension had passed and Helen offered him her mouth to kiss.

I think that Mr. Basso has made a mistake in not naming New Orleans as the scene of his novel. The ordinary reader who does not know New Orleans might be puzzled by the unfamiliar society in which Mr. Basso's story takes place—an American city with a Catholic cathedral and a shoe factory founded by a Frenchman, whose family still live more or less like Europeans. This situation is not typically American. New Orleans is not typically American—and in nothing is it less typically American than in its ability to produce and to nourish a talent as sensitive and unemphatic, yet as poetic and alive, as Mr. Basso's.

EDMUND WILSON.

The Ways of the Wise

The Psychology of Philosophers, by Alexander Herzberg, translated by E. B. F. Wareing. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 230 pages. $3.50.

PHILOSOPHERS are strange fish indeed. Though pronounced the most elusive of God's creatures, they are always being caught in the meshes of fable, speared by the shafts of ridicule and swallowed alive by one another; indeed, they dangle pathetically from almost any line—especially when baited with a little psychoanalysis.

Those trapped in Mr. Herzberg's net would be wondrously, if not so familiarly, strange. They "assume unmistakable common forms; warning voices and the longing for an outlet for emotions, diffident and gauche behavior, cautiousness, mistrust, exceptional persistence of inhibitive influence, a tendency to anxiety and depression to the point of harboring thoughts of suicide." Most of them tend toward poetic expression; they are diffident in or unsuited for marriage, social intercourse and politics; they show a hesitancy to embark on careers or manifest an incompetence in them; and they are unwilling or unable to earn money. Strongly inhibited from action, they become interested in the "more general problems which expressly arouse human emotions." Philosophy is, for them, an alternative to action. It is a new name for the world of make-believe in which they can "persuade themselves that the grapes [*i. e.*, existing things] are not-even real, are an optical illusion, a phenomenon of consciousness, an appearance."

Such are the conclusions wrested from a study of the lives of the "thirty greatest philosophers," among whom are such questionable figures as Rousseau, Herbert, Fechner, Feuerbach, Stirner, Spencer, Hartmann and Nietzsche. It is doubtful whether even those who are willing to accept Mr. Herzberg's list and conclusions will find this study convincing, for his material includes not only authentic biographies but exploded legends as well, and his judgments are frequently vitiated by the fallacies of simplification, selection and accent.

Such empirical, dubious evaluations will never give way to basic and penetrating analysis until it is realized that men are best known, not by their foibles, but by the ideals they pursue, and that the real clue to the nature of man as philosopher is to be found in the nature of philosophy itself. The "Psychology of Philosophers" is only a partial study of some philosophers as men.

PAUL WEISS.

The Mexican

The Underdogs (Los de Abajo), by
la, translated by Enrique Munguía. N
tano's. $2.50.

Idols behind Altars, by Anita Brenner. N
Payson and Clarke. 359 pages. $5.

THE country to our south has greater treasures
us than its oil and its gold. It is a land immeasurably rich in human spirit. There is some reason for José Vasconcelos' visionary notion that his nation's chaos should help to create *"la raza cósmica."* For in Mexico, there seem to be all pasts—of fact and of legend. Atlantis, Egypt, China, Africa, Spain and Europe seem to have come together here to create a way of life that is not similar to any past or to any present way in the world. In Mexico there are Indians whose daily crafts precisely carry on the profound arts of cultures buried when Cortés landed; in Mexico, a Communist steeped in Moscow and Paris paints a fresco in the *Palacio Nacional.* Mexico the ancient already possesses a dimension which may be the future. No wonder its people, busied since independence with self-discovery and self-articulation, have proved so listless—perhaps tragically careless—in the exploitation of their oil and ore, and have abandoned these practical tasks to the British, the Americans and the French.

This greater treasure, so distinct from the spirit of Europe that it may indeed create a new world, and so vital that it cannot fail to create one, is now becoming expansive. The mines and the wells lie passive, until the foreigner steals in and claims their booty. But this other kind of wealth does not wait for the stranger. It is getting itself embodied in plastic, in myriad crafts, in word, in music: and it is invading the United States.

Here are two examples in book form of the Mexican invasion. Early examples, for the invasion has scarcely begun. They herald a campaign of esthetic, emotional, intellectual infiltration which should last for centuries, and which may have effect on our American spirit as deep as that which American armies, later American engineers and business men, have had on Mexico. Since our Manifest Destiny first stole an empire from Mexico and added it to the United States, the penetration of our commerce and industry has fatefully proceeded. Mexico lives today within the orbit of our economics; no political force can thrive in Mexico that does not come to terms, tacit or avowed, with American money. This means, of course, that Mexico is very close to us; and will come closer, until the line which separates San Antonio and Los Angeles on the one side from Monterey and Chihuahua on the other grows not less real, but more entirely symbolic. As our money forces go down, cutting their lanes of communication, something from Mexico is beginning to come up. Imperial roads work both ways. Ere now, although built for armies and for commercial caravans, they have carried a Word. Saint Paul traveled the legionary and mercantile routes of Rome; so had the Greeks before him, so did the Patrists a little later. As our oil-inspectors, our banker-diplomats, our salesmen pass along the well traveled road to Mexico, whom will they meet bound north?

Dr. Azuela's novel follows kindred work by the great painter Orozco, who has illustrated this American edition. It is a tale of the Revolution. But the translated "Underdogs" is a mistake. "Los de Abajo"
tion of piety and respect, above
is the term for the
humble, from whom

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vertone which is the spirit of the
tion on the whole is excellent. It
English this luminous, crass, subtle,
an Spanish. Nor is it without signifi-
work was done by a Mexican lawyer, En-
ia, attached as advocate to his country's em-
Washington.

uela's book has been called photographic realism: but
omer and Cervantes antedated Daguerre, wherefore I consider the description ill-chosen. His portrayal of the blind whirl of revolution has been called bitterly satiric: it seems to me rather to be merely faithful and humbly clairvoyant. If you look with an intelligent eye at men in business—or at men in civil war—you are likely to judge that they are fools. But if you are an artist, you will find that there is beauty in them. And if you are a great artist, you will find (even if you have never heard of Spinoza and utterly reject the Epistles of Saint Paul) that they are divine. Doctor Azuela is intelligent, and a great artist. He is a silent man, and his hands and heart are busy all the day, healing the plagues of the lowly. He does not talk about what he saw in the Mexican revolution. Probably, even to himself he is not confiding. But his pages reveal his complete and therefore prophetic vision. He saw the folly of men, and the divinity. His book is significant, because both these qualities are in it; the beauty, the tenderness, the vital splendor, the immaculate life of this Mexico of his tale are important, precisely because these traits reside within and emanate from the cruelty, the sordidness, the filth and desperation of the Mexico he portrays.

Moreover, the book is well joined as a Greek ode. A story of indescribable confusion, it has the body of an inner order—an order not in the least intellectual or studied; an order that is organic. And this, too, is important. The terrible materials of this chaos which Azuela describes are integrally related: seen as a whole, they fall into place, its esthetic form proves that this chaos is on the way to being an organic world: the book depicts the ignorance and horror of the Mexican struggle; but within them, plainly, is wisdom and revelation. You might admit that no man could record so low a story and make it beautiful, who was not a great man. I prefer to insist that no man could have done this who did not belong to a potentially great people.

Miss Brenner's book will be read with full appreciation by those who have already tasted Mexico in such tales as Azuela's, in such music as that of Carlos Chavez, in the cartoons of Posada, in the paintings of Rivera, Angel, Orozco, Lozano, or—best of all—in the crafts of Michoacan and Guadalajara. For "Idols behind Altars" is a remarkable synthesis, in personal form, of all such elements. Americans will find the volume hard to classify. Is it criticism? or history, or an imaginative portrait? Like everything real which comes from Mexico, it is above all, art. Miss Brenner is a Mexican not alone by birth, but as well by choice. Her father, I believe, is an American. She is at home on both shores of the muddy Rio Grande. She has sat familiarly with Gamio, under the falsely named Pyramids of Teotihuacan; but she has sat no less competently in the class-room of Franz Boas. She is sound in learning, gifted in the use of sharp pictorial language; and she loves the land which she has begun to portray. These are all elements in her nature likely to mislead the
ional American critic, who does not look for beauty
archeologist, nor for erudition in the
paint a portrait of Mexico. Naturally, her work is not a complete portrayal. But it has lines and colors more revealing of the spirit of that land than any I have found elsewhere in print. To gather her materials, she needed to be a student: for the secret of so much that moves silent across the Mexican fields in the modern Indian or *meztizo,* lies in the buried idols and the crumbled temples of Maya and Toltec. To integrate her materials, she needed to be a creator. For Mexico is itself unborn: Mexico has not yet converged from her chaos. To make her work live, she needed to be a mystic lover of the land. For Mexico is in hard and miserable confusion: its loveliness is tortured by the circumstance of its envied position in an imperialistic world, tortured so painfully that only a Mexican artist who is something of a prophet can avoid despair.

I feel that, with all these qualifications, Miss Brenner has been remarkably successful. In her pages, you will come to feel the Indian, to know his village; you will understand why peons living in squalor can produce woodwork and pottery that equals the archaic Egyptian. You will meet the modern Mexican artist—that amazing cohort whom the great Vasconcelos gathered under Obregon and who, in a few years, put on the walls of official buildings, here in America, a plastic expression possibly not equalled in the Occident since the death of the Gothic. Her work suffers stylistically through the fact that the author is too close to Mexico always to write a wholly idiomatic English. But since her book brings very close the mystery and splendor of Mexico, this blemish is easily forgiven.

WALDO FRANK.

A Landed Proprietor

The Good Estate of Poetry, by Chauncey Brewster Tinker. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $2.50.

I HAD thought of Professor Tinker, before reading this book, as a kind of minor edition of some eighteenth-century wit. Unless that mythical wit was also an orthodox Anglican, I take it all back—they had nothing in common.

The present book consists of a series of essays on the subject of poetry, most of which have appeared in magazines. Professor Tinker has nothing startling to say; his object in writing these appreciative essays, we gather, was more to correct lapses in modern taste by reminding us of ancient worth than to attempt any appraisal of contemporary writers. Not that he avoids any mention of his contemporaries; they bob up from time to time, and not always as men of straw; but his main interest, naturally enough, is in the past. The book closes with a direct challenge, or rather a shrug of the shoulders, to the poets of today: "a lifelong student of poetry," such as Professor Tinker, can well afford to be "a little carefree in his judgments of contemporary literature," since his real devotion goes to literature "which has stood not only the test of time but also that of his individual needs . . . in literature as in life one may do worse than to cast in his lot with the aristocracy." This is certainly very revealing, and goes a long way to explain the snobbish ignorance about writing which our young college graduate exhibits today.

Professor Tinker, in the course of his animadversions, asks a good many questions which he evidently takes to be rhetorical. It depends somewhat on the audience, of course, whether a writer's questions are rhetorical or not. I think a mere repetition of some of them here, to this audience, will show just how rhetorical they are.

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> For if we are . . . born only to suffer, if we are merely waiting our turn upon the scaffold, there remain to us but the virtue of stoicism and the grace of a gesture. Why cry out? Why dismay the others? It is futile to keep on singing to blindfolded victims that it is indeed the scaffold they have reached. For them, as for all creatures caught in a trap, silence is best.

Professor Tinker pretends to admire Housman, and other such scaffold-poets. But why, may I ask rhetorically, this pretense?

"Is the meaning of Francis Thompson's 'Hound of Heaven,'" demands the Professor, "to be grasped by one who rejects the notion of a loving personality behind the universe?" "How shall the rapture of Burns be revealed to the unimpassioned, or the poetry of sorrow give up its secret to one who has never known a loss?" Well, if it's such questions you're asking, we're almost tempted to reply, "How can a college professor understand literature at all?"

T. S. MATTHEWS.

Poet's Progress

Collected Poems (1914-26), by Robert Graves. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 217 pages. $2.50.

THE name of Robert Graves is associated in my mind chiefly with three tiny books bound in purplish blue and in gay orange, and stamped on green paper, respectively: "Fairies and Fusiliers," "Country Sentiment," and "The Pier-Glass." They have the appearance of books intended for the low shelves of the nursery, and indeed, the first two are crammed with such melodies as delight simple-hearted folk. But the sinister tone that marks much of the third volume is resonant in not a few of the earlier lyrics, as well. What one finds throughout is a rippling current of music that carries tenderness and humor, crossed by that harsh strain trench-dwellers could not dam up. Becoming vocal about the same time as two of his friends, Robert Nichols and Siegfried Sassoon, Graves's verse invited comparison with the sardonic grief of the one and the sad serenity of the other. He too was a poet turned soldier, and what struck one in those first brief volumes was the sweet force of his lyric gift, which not even the grimmest experience could sour. There was even something a little shocking about the appearance of so many seemingly trivial catches and homely ballads on pages neighboring bleak notations of war. And yet, so gay were the tunes, such a bloom was on the brief rhymed tales, that pleasure in their beauties outweighed surprise at their presence.

In this collection Graves offers the contents of those far-away volumes, together with the verse that he has written during the five years following the publication of "The Pier-Glass." He has omitted some lyrics for which he has ceased to care, notably the "anthology-pieces," being an inveterate hater of anthologists and all their works. The book, which is chronologically arranged, falls into five parts. The first of these, lyrics written between 1914 and 1920, is all compact of melody. There are nursery rhymes, like "Mirror, Mirror" and "Blackhorse Lane," folk-songs, like "Henry and Mary," ballads, like "A Frosty Night," and its counterpart, "Apples and Water." They fairly sing themselves, and one wonders whether any of them have been set to music, or whether Graves is as hostile to such marriages as to the escape of his poems into other men's coll... imagine a musician doing no wors... pieces than Schumann and Schubert did... is not that they fail to stand alone, but that the si... of them inevitably suggests a candle-lit piano and a singing voice.

The next section is abruptly entitled "War," but most of the inclusions here do not suggest the horrors of the trenches so clearly as the desperate nostalgia of the soldier for "golden-houred 'Après-la-guerre,'" and his fantastically glamorous imaginings of it. The idyll called "A Bough of Nonsense," in which two Fusiliers, presumably the poet and his comrade, Sassoon, "sit and weave a nonsense hymn," probably to keep from going mad, has more than Learish charm. The forcible lines entitled "The Legion" are memorable for their thrust, and "Dead Cow Farm" gives almost as sure a "cure for lust of blood" as the postscript to "Familiar Letter. . . ." The following section is less clearly defined. Its contents are more somber, but not because the poet dwells on bleak personal experience. Indeed, most of these verses are objective. Such titles as "Ghost Raddled," "Incubus," "Children of Darkness," "The Witches' Cauldron," give the temper of this group. His attack is not so sure here. Seldom does he snare the harmonies that earlier were his for the asking.

In 1924, Graves edited an extraordinarily slim book of poems by John Crowe Ransome, for British consumption. It was a mark of discernment that he should have discovered this then all-too-obscure American *confrère,* and there is reason to be grateful for his having bruited the man's fame abroad. In Graves's later poems I think I am not mistaken in finding a more signal tribute to Ransome: that of imitation. Certainly Graves's early work showed none of the metaphysical moralizings, none of the verbal involutions, that obliquely suggest the style of the American poet. Above all, it lacked the peculiar cadence, the individual use of feminine endings, the mouth-filling polysyllables, that are so intrinsic a part of Ransome's masterly verse. Consider, for example, the first stanza of Graves's "The Clipped Stater," an ironic piece which is the clearest instance of his debt:

> He, Alexander, had been deified
> By loud applause of the Macedonian phalanx,
> By sullen groans of the wide world he had vanquished.
> Who but a God could have so hacked down their pride?

If this poem was not written after reading Ransome, then two minds go singularly the same route.

The fact that Graves should have come to admire the Tennessee poet so deeply is testimony to the distance he has traveled since the writing of his first blithe lyrics. There is a chasm between those endearingly melodious trivia and the angry irony and belligerent funning of his latest period. In an amusing but somewhat too long-drawn-out satire, called "The Marmosite's Miscellany," he observes:

> The beginning of wisdom is laughter and song,
> The furtherance of wisdom is scholarship and groans.

Graves seems to be intent latterly on the furtherance of wisdom. But whereas Ransome can proceed with it and remain a poet, Graves appears to be unable to make his learned groans musical. One could wish that he would return to his beginnings, but since that is manifestly im-

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possible, one must hope that he will yet discover how to combine intellection and its melancholies with his old verbal and musical felicity.

BABETTE DEUTSCH.

"Ultima Thule"

Ultima Thule, by Henry Handel Richardson. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. $2.50.

IT is difficult to say anything definite about the work of H. H. Richardson on the basis of this single novel. Of course the extraordinary merits of her "Maurice Guest" are well known among those who have sought out that most remarkable study of life among the music students of Munich. But the American public as yet has no access to the earlier volumes of the trilogy of which "Ultima Thule" is the concluding instalment. Nor have they had an opportunity to read her novel, "The Getting of Wisdom," telling the story of her experiences in a school for girls in Melbourne.

It would, however, appear that, in the first volume of the trilogy, we have the story of Richard Mahony, an immigrant Irish doctor rising to success in the mining town of Ballarat during the days of the gold rush. He becomes the leading physician of the town. Cursed with an extraordinarily sensitive temperament, characterized by arrogance, pride and instability, he madly resolves to throw up his practice and end his days in England. There he will find a small practice in a country district and with the income it produces, plus the income from his Australian investments, live in comfort and peace.

In "The Way Home" (which will appear in January) the story of Mahony's English experience unfold themselves. He is led by his headstrong and ill-founded optimism to purchase a moribund practice in a small English manufacturing city. It peters out rapidly and Mahony impetuously pitches upon a practice in a small English village dominated by the snobbery of the local aristocracy. There he finds himself the victim of the English hostility to one whose experience in medicine was gained in the colonies. Furthermore, both he and his wife have lost all touch with the scale of values that Englishmen use to govern their lives. Mahony is so morbidly sensitive that the smallest slight rankles until it darkens his whole life. Finally there is nothing to do but return to Australia forthwith. Before he sets foot in Melbourne, mail is brought on board the boat announcing that his fortune has been augmented many-fold. He can live a life of leisure. But though he has dreamed of doing so for years, his morbidity will not allow him to find peace. His books lead him, not to serenity, but to spiritualism. He foolishly cuts himself off from former associates and ends up by being a stranger in his adopted country. He resolves to tour Europe. He is feverishly moving about Europe, pained by trifles, when, in Venice, he receives a cablegram announcing that his Australian agent has absconded. He hurries home to find that of his former opulence but three thousand pounds remains.

It is at this point that "Ultima Thule" begins. The previous volumes of the trilogy are preparatory to this and the claim that it can be read as a separate story seems to me rather ill-founded. For without the background one cannot fully understand the exacerbated condition of Mahony's nerves, the ill-balanced nature of his emotional life, his avoidance of former friends, his morbid fear of slights, and his inability to adjust himself to straitened

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circumstances. "Ultima Thule" is the closing and ironic act in the drama. (He had called the home he built in the first flush of his opulence Ultima Thule!) Without the earlier story the full force of the terrible climax of the drama, Mahony's succumbing to manic-depressive insanity, loses much of its force.

Yet even in isolation "Ultima Thule" is a remarkable novel. There is no novel in Australian literature that so cuttingly analyzes the society of that country, for though it depicts conditions in the 1870's, in all essentials the same conditions obtain today. Nor is there any better presentation of the terrible heat and drought that curses life in the back country. However, one should carefully note that Richard Mahony's career represents the defeat of a type never meant for immigrant struggles. Naturally, then, this book presents the worst side of Australian life. For a presentation of the country as a critical patriot sees it, one should turn to Tom Collins' "Such Is Life." But most remarkable is the presentation of the character of Richard Mahony. It is the analysis of it that gives the novel force. As a study of nervous and emotional instability it is difficult to think of anything comparable. Even if it stood alone, "Ultima Thule" would, for that reason, be a remarkable and significant novel.

C. HARTLEY GRATTAN.

Catherine Foster, by H. E. Bates. New York: Viking Press. $2.50.

MR. BATES is a very young man; it is hard to tell, from reading this novel alone, whether his work justifies the reputation he seems to have won by his earlier books in England, as a writer of considerable promise and distinction. One has an uncomfortable feeling that even if "Catherine Foster" were what he intended it to be, a restrained and stylized narrative of an ordinary woman's rebellion against the monotony of life, it would still be a dull and commonplace book. It is written with too much self-consciousness, too patent a preoccupation with words and niceties of phrasing ever to achieve more than the promise of a style; the observation is banal, and the people are too flat and commonplace to be interesting even if they were better done. Obviously Mr. Bates is an admirer of David Garnett; he has also read Flaubert, and the more one struggles through books of this type, the more admiration one has for "Madame Bovary," the parent of them all.

H. C. C.

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